

Gourmet 811

Chapter 811

The truth was, both the residents and soldiers of Edea were very, very scared.

‘Please. I beg you, do not give us the order to attack...’

They were shaking to their core. Some even felt like they were going to lose control over their bladder.

“Keuaaaaaaaaaack!”

The comrades that laughed and drank with them just yesterday had fallen on the ground, blood spurting out of their chests. Someone who vowed to receive the Jade Emperor’s apology died helplessly on the battlefield. The desire to live was after all, basic instinct.

The fear had increased, especially after realizing that their victory seemed to be a shot in the dark. The Jade Emperor’s Heavenly Army had superior weapons and defensive equipment and was much stronger than them. They were only 30,000 strong but were killing hundreds of thousands of people each day.

‘I’d rather we apologize to the Jade Emperor.’

Rather than dying helplessly in this battle, they would rather surrender and beg for the Jade Emperor’s forgiveness.

‘I’m exhausted.’

‘We will die.’

‘There’s no hope.’

At that moment, an unknown voice rang in their ears.

[I am the Highest God that wields the Greatest Sword.]

[Look. This is the path to victory.]

“...”

“...”

“...”

The frightened, exhausted and battle-weary soldiers of Edea raised their heads when they heard the voice. There were still 15,000 surviving Heavenly Army troops that were pushing them back. Who was the owner of this voice?

‘Who is that?’

‘No way... God?’

It was rare for ordinary humans to have any opportunities to meet and face God. That was why it came as a bigger shock to them that a god had suddenly appeared here.

Vwoooooooooong—

Vwoooooooooong—

However, that was not the only thing that surprised them. Their crude weapons and shields vibrated and resonated with something. It was even more surprising for the Heavenly Army, who were wielding far superior weapons and artifacts than the soldiers of Edea. They realized that their sharp swords had lost momentum, and their tough, sturdy armor suddenly felt like flimsy cloth.

The spooked horses had already raised their hind legs and shook them off their backs.

Thud, thud, thud, thud, thud—

The ground shook and vibrated.

“He, he’s really a god?!!!” Someone’s cry raised everyone’s expectations.

Hope slowly started to bloom in the eyes of the exhausted soldiers of Edea. Their eyes immediately turned and followed the direction of the voice, their gazes landing upon the figure of a man.

Shwaaaaaaaaa—

The wind blew fiercely, and the man appeared alone in front of the 15,000 flustered soldiers of the Heavenly Army. The man’s white cape, carrying the symbol of the fork and knife crossed together, fluttered majestically behind him. The black sword in his hands reflected the bright light of the sun and gave off a powerful momentum.

“F, Food God!!!”

Minhyuk was the one who had saved the Kingdom of Eden. Some of the soldiers had seen him personally save and rescue the Bull Demon King. The words ‘Food God’ caused a huge commotion among the troops of Edea. From what they heard, the Great Sage, Heaven’s Equal and the Kingdom of Eden’s Aaron had received help from this person. However, those who had not seen him in person would always tend to deny his existence.

Minhyuk turned around, his gentle and soft eyes framed by his dark hair as he looked at the soldiers behind him. He flashed a very soft smile at them before turning back around and charging forward.

“He, he’s alone?!”

There were still around 15,000 enemy troops, but Minhyuk courageously took a step forward.

Weapons, defensive equipment, and artifacts were all very important items. Between a player equipped with a wooden sword of 100 attack and one wielding a sword with 1,000 attack, the one with the wooden sword would be able to reduce their opponent’s HP by 100, whereas the one equipped with the sword of 1,000 attack could cut down their opponent’s HP by 500. This was only the case because the opponent was wearing armor on their body.

Right now, the enemies’ armor and equipment’s defenses all dropped to 1, albeit temporarily. Even their weapons’ attack dropped to 1. Simply put, the fact that their weapons and defensive equipment had been restricted meant that they had grown at least 50% weaker than normal.

“How dare you?! You think you can deal with us alone?!” One of the Heavenly Commanders sneered.

Minhyuk was fully aware that there was only one way, perhaps the best way, to win the hearts of the people in the world. That was to make them witness him in action.

“Die!!!”

Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom—!

The Heavenly Army’s mages unleashed a barrage of magical attacks.

Minhyuk’s magical defense could be said to be very, very high. It was all thanks to the elixirs and medicines that he had eaten before, as well as the special effect attached to the Slaughterer’s Armor that tripled his basic magical defense.

At this point, the staves and wands of the enemy had all lost their magical attack. The mages were beings that did not just rely on artifacts. The damage that their magic attack could inflict would also differ depending on the magical attack of their wand or staff.

A thick cloud of dust rose from the explosion created by the magical attacks. However, Minhyuk walked out of the dust unscathed.

“...!”

Everyone looked at him in shock.

Minhyuk, who was free of injuries, declared, “Intangible Sword.”

Stab—

An invisible sword flew and pierced the heart of the Heavenly Commander standing at the vanguard. He was appalled.

‘H, how...’

The armor that he wore truly felt like it was just a piece of cloth. Perhaps, it would have been much better if he had worn a real cloth on his body. At least then, he would not be forced to fight while carrying the heavy weight of the armor.

Not long after, the Intangible Sword split and turned into hundreds of invisible swords that pierced through the hearts of the Heavenly Army’s soldiers.

Stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab—

The Heavenly Army was suddenly plunged into chaos. The armor that usually halved the damage that the soldiers received did not protect them nor prevent the attack from inflicting damage upon them. Of course, the ‘Intangible Sword’ also had the power to ignore all of Minhyuk’s enemy defenses.

However, it did not end there. Another threatening force appeared and encroached upon those who lost the protection of their defensive equipment.

“Stormy.”

Swoooooooooooooosh—

A sword with an ego of its own appeared and created hundreds of blades that danced and rained upon the enemies.

Vwoooooooooong—!

The enemies fell helplessly against these sword blades.

Clang, clang, clang!

They tried to defend themselves, but their defensive equipment were easily pierced through, the blade cutting through them like sheets of paper.

“Uwaaaaaaaaaack!”

“Keuaaaaaaaaaack!”

“Keuhaaaaaaaaaaack!”

The enemies screamed while Minhyuk used his Slaughterer’s Absorption to restore his HP. However, what was more astonishing to the Heavenly Army was the fact that their attacks did not even put a toll on Minhyuk’s body.

Claaaang—

Even though they stabbed their enemy as usual, the attack that should have pierced through the enemy’s armor and stabbed straight through his abdomen was completely blocked by the opponent’s armor. The attacks did not even reach their target.

Minhyuk smirked at the Heavenly Army’s soldier, who was looking down at his sword in confusion.

“What’s this, huh?”

“...”

Shwaaaaaaaaaaa—!

Minhyuk easily cut down the soldier in front of him. A Level 550 Heavenly Army soldier died, just like that, blood spurting out of his body. Even though Minhyuk jumped into the ranks of the 15,000-strong Heavenly Army and received the brunt of their attacks, he did not even feel any danger at all.

Crackleeeeeeeee—!

The blazing flames kept the enemies at bay. Originally, the Overlord’s Technique could only injure the Heavenly Army troops and not kill them. However, it was very different right now.

Crackleeeeeeeee—!

A huge storm of fire spread out and covered everything the moment he swung his sword and released Overlord’s Technique. At the same time, the enemies that were caught by the raging Overlord’s Technique had their flesh and bones burned down until only ashes were left.

[You have gained 11,013,000 EXP.]

[You have gained 13,154,167 EXP.]

[...EXP.]

[You have gained 17 platinum.]

[You have gained 19 platinum.]

[...21...]

As expected, the high-level Heavenly Army troops were truly in a different league. Each of the soldiers dropped around 20 platinum, while giving him a huge amount of EXP.

Swooooooosh—

No corpses could be seen on the ground where the flames were slowly dying down. Everything was reduced to ashes and had disappeared into nothingness.

“...”

Fear slowly started to appear in the eyes of the enemies while hope started to sprout in the hearts of the allied forces of Edea. These were the Heavenly Army soldiers that they could not even deal with earlier. Yet, this lone man overwhelmed them completely without the help of the allied forces.

“Hiiiiiiik...!”

In the end, the great and majestic Heavenly Army ran away from Minhyuk as if they had seen a ghost. The one-sided battle that unfolded in front of them caused their morale to plummet, which made it even easier for Minhyuk to deal with them.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

Minhyuk chased after the enemies with his black sword carrying the golden symbol of ‘Explosion’ on its blade. He dashed swiftly and swept the enemies around him.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

The soldiers of the Heavenly Army died under his sword one after another as he cut through them. Meanwhile, the Heavenly Commanders made a decision. They wanted to kill Minhyuk somehow. They did not know how long the restriction on their weapons and defensive equipment would last; that was why they were very reluctant to do this.

They all approached Minhyuk and pulled out their weapons. They moved to cut him with their swords, stab him with their spears, and shoot them with their arrows.

[The Heavenly Army’s Faded Sword has started regaining its original power.]

[The Heavenly Army’s Faded...]

That was when the momentum of the swords that disappeared slowly began to return, causing the swords to light up brightly. While this was happening, all of the soldiers that were spread out over the place had flocked to one area. They had somehow ended up with Minhyuk standing in the middle of everything. Now that they had their sharp swords and spears, they could kill this bastard!

However, there was a grin on Minhyuk’s face. Sparks started to dance on the blade of his sword.

Crack, crack, crack, crack—

Baaaaaaang—!

The swords of lightning created by the ‘Sword of Absolute Death’ fell down from the sky and killed the Heavenly Commanders. At the same, hundreds of lightning bolts rained down and swept away the enemies that gathered around him.

Defensive equipment did not matter at this point. The 5,000% additional damage of the Sword of Absolute Death far exceeded what those defensive equipment could handle.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

The Heavenly Army soldiers were all helpless under the onslaught of the lightning strikes that fell constantly upon them.

[The faith of Edea's residents in you is increasing.]

[They have started to deify you!]

[You have acquired the Title: Heavenly Army's Slaughterer.]

He was also able to obtain a special title that could help increase his attack power by 8% whenever he was fighting against the Heavenly Army.

Shwaaaaaaaaa—

The wind blew fiercely after the Sword of Absolute Death ended. The time it took for Minhyuk to cut down all 15,000 surviving troops of the Heavenly Army was only three minutes.

'I didn't expect that the effects of losing the power of all artifacts would be this great.'

Minhyuk could not help but be in awe.

Meanwhile, the residents and troops of Edea felt like they had caught a small glimpse of hope once again as they cheered loudly.

“Uwaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

However, amidst the cheering troops, there was one person who had broken out in cold sweat. This person was none other than Zhu Bajie.

The Allied Forces of Edea cheered loudly.

“Uwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!!!”

“Food Gooooood!!!”

“Thank you! Thank you for staying by our side!!!”

“Uwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!!!”

The soldiers of Edea shed tears of happiness as hope started to bloom in their hearts once again. With the sword's resonance, the Heavenly Army was forced to become helpless in front of a god.

“...”

Zhu Bajie, who watched this scene, could not help but be surprised.

Meanwhile, the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal murmured, “He has grown stronger.”

Zhu Bajie groaned. How could a god like that have that much momentum and might? However, he was worried about something else.

[You have lost the bet against Beyond the Heavens' King Minhyuk.]

[You will have to listen to one thing that he wants as long as it does not cross the line.]

Cold sweat slowly dripped down Zhu Bajie's pig face. However, he shook his head and thought, 'Even if he won against the enemy like that, he should not dare to beat me, a king of a nation, right?'

Zhu Bajie thought that the Runt Kingdom was a very important force in the fight against the Jade Emperor. He believed that Minhyuk must have said those words just so he could keep him in check. At that moment, Minhyuk climbed up the walls once again. Zhu Bajie confidently said, "I, the king of Runt Kingdom, has made a promise with you. I will grant you one thing that you want!!!"

Then, he added, "I have seen everything. Your strength might be more than enough, but!"

Thud—

Zhu Bajie slammed his trident and continued, "Your performance in the battle against the Jade Emperor still remains to be seen. Alright, what do you want?"

Zhu Bajie was clearly the one who had wronged Minhyuk. Minhyuk had greeted him and showed him courtesy first. As a king of a nation, would he act politely if it was for nothing? However, Zhu Bajie had forsaken the courtesy between them. In fact, he did not even want to acknowledge him.

"Money? Artifacts?"

Zhu Bajie still believed that this man would not beat him.

"Wait. Walk."

Minhyuk led Zhu Bajie away. Zhu Bajie, who was trying to maintain his pride, followed him,

"I don't think you meant what you said before. You wouldn't beat a king of a nation, no? So, tell me what you want."

"But that's what I want? Hmm."

Minhyuk pondered deeply as he walked with Zhu Bajie.

'As expected, it was a bluff.'

Zhu Bajie chuckled to himself as he continued to walk with Minhyuk. Then, Minhyuk suddenly put his hand on the king's shoulder and stopped him.

"We're here."

Zhu Bajie looked puzzled. He was also busy thinking to himself while he walked with Minhyuk. However, he found himself inside what seemed to be an armory in a deserted part of the castle walls.

Creaaaaaaaak—

Minhyuk grinned as he closed the door. Then, he whispered, "No one will know if I beat you up in this place."

"..."

Chapter 812

Although Zhu Bajie could not compare with Sun Wukong, he was the second among all of the kings of Edea in terms of power and force. His kingdom's military might far surpassed that of the Kingdom of Eden. Due to that, the king of the Runt Kingdom was a key figure in this war.

Zhu Bajie, who had been led inside the abandoned armory, listened to Minhyuk who closed the door and said, "No one will know if I beat you up in this place."

"..."

At this point, Zhu Bajie already thought that there was something wrong. Even if Minhyuk said that he would beat him earlier, it should have been nothing but a bluff.

However, Minhyuk's expression remained cold. "To be honest, I thought that you would apologize to me after I displayed my prowess."

"..."

"You have treated me rudely at first. However, I let it go. It was only natural not to trust me since you haven't personally seen what I am capable of. But I showed my capabilities."

"..."

"Unfortunately, you threw your chance away. You should have apologized. But you did not admit your mistakes. You even held on to your useless pride and arrogance and kept on barking at me like a dog."

"So, so what, huh..."

Zhu Bajie was not given the chance to finish his words.

Baaaaaaang—

Minhyuk's fist connected with Zhu Bajie's face, shocking the king with how hard the hit was. The blow felt like a rock had smashed into him! Just like what was mentioned before, Zhu Bajie was also a key figure in Edea. He was a powerhouse of the continent. However, just when he was about to jump up and pounce on Minhyuk, Minhyuk kicked his neck.

Craaaaack—

"This is what I want. I want you to keep that mouth of yours shut. Don't go and scream about how I beat you to a pulp."

[You have lost the bet. You have to listen to your opponent's demands.]

[If you break your promise, then you will receive punishment.]

After ensuring their privacy, true to his words, Minhyuk began to beat Zhu Bajie into a pulp.

Thump— Thud— thump, thump, thump— Baaang—

"Ack! Ugh! Urk! Hik! Uweeck! Keuaaaaaack!!!"

Zhu Bajie had never been treated like this in his life. Today was the day he realized what the words 'beaten to a pulp' truly meant.

Shwaaaaa—

“Urk, ugh... Th, that... it... exploded?”

Minhyuk, who was doing the beating, and Zhu Bajie, who was receiving the beating, both paused for two seconds.

“It did not explode.”

Then, Minhyuk continued to beat him up. He did not hold back his punches at all, because he truly did not like Zhu Bajie. Of course, Minhyuk thought that it was quite rude to treat an ally that would fight alongside him later like this. If the man in front of him was the enemy, he would not have hesitated to cut his head off. But since he could not kill him, he opted to beat him up.

Finally, big fat tears started to roll down Zhu Bajie’s right eye.

“S, stop...!”

Zhu Bajie actually knew that he deserved this beating. If it was his usual self, Zhu Bajie would be able to confidently say that he was not really small-minded and petty. He just felt so heartbroken when he saw his soldiers die helplessly one after the other.

He could not help the tears that welled up in his eyes as his people gave up their lives to fight such an uphill battle. Perhaps that was why he found Minhyuk, who gave these people hope after they had to sacrifice their lives, revolting.

However, there was no denying the fact that he had wronged Minhyuk. He did not even acknowledge the fact that he did it. That was why he truly deserved this beating.

“Hwiiiiiiiiik!”

The cries of a pig being ‘slaughtered’ rang loudly from within the abandoned armory.

Xuanzang had followed right behind Minhyuk and Zhu Bajie because he was extremely worried about the two. That was when he heard the cries from Zhu Bajie from inside the armory.

“Namo Amitabha Buddha...” Xuanzang recited as he turned the beads in his hands.

Not long after, Minhyuk, who was breathing roughly, came out of the armory. The man bowed politely when he made eye contact with Xuanzang.

‘He definitely has a firm character.’

Of course, if Minhyuk had stepped back in this situation, then even Xuanzang would not have understood this point. He also knew that Zhu Bajie had behaved rudely. However, a man’s mind was very complicated. Of course, they would feel uncomfortable if the person that they knew and cared about was beaten up by someone that they had only met. Even so, Xuanzang just silently turned the beads in his hands.

The allied forces were finally given a break after all of the troops of the Heavenly Army had been killed.

Minhyuk walked with Xuanzang and met with Sun Wukong.

“You have grown stronger than before.” Sun Wukong smiled lightly. Then, he looked around and said, “I just want to protect this land that my dear wife loved.”

Minhyuk nodded when he heard those words. He was already trying his hardest to prepare for the war. However, he had judged that the most important thing to do was to bridge the huge chasm between the allied forces and their enemies, the Heavenly Army and the Heavenly Commanders.

Because of that, Minhyuk had swept clean almost all of the ingredients in the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. He would use these ingredients to make Sun Wukong and the others grow stronger. However, that did not mean that he would use all of the ingredients in his hands just for their sake.

“Edea has a lot of special and excellent ingredients, no?”

“There are a lot. In fact, Zhu Bajie’s Runt Kingdom has quite a lot of such materials.”

“Runt Kingdom?”

“Bajie likes to eat and is always seeking ways to eat more delicious dishes. Because of that, the crops and livestock of the Runt Kingdom are much better than the rest of the kingdoms in Edea.”

“Hmm...” Minhyuk hummed.

Of course, it was only natural that Zhu Bajie’s kingdom was filled with ingredients. However, Minhyuk did not have any regrets with regards to beating the man up.

“How good is the quality?”

“Hmm. I don’t really know too well. From what I heard from the chefs, nothing can compare to Bajie’s ingredients when it comes to ingredients for buffed dishes.” Sun Wukong rubbed his furry and fuzzy chin. “Compared to the ingredients that one can generally get from our kingdoms, the ingredients from the Runt Kingdom can help increase the probability of producing higher grade dishes.”

“Is it possible for me to see some ingredients?”

Sun Wukong nodded. Not long after, a soldier brought some of the ingredients from the Runt Kingdom. Ingredients were very important during war, especially for long, large-scale battles.

(Runt Kingdom’s Bean Sprouts)

Ingredient Grade: D

Special Abilities:

- Increase in Vitality (VIT).
- Increase in STR and STM.
- Increases the chance of getting a higher grade of dish by four times.

Description: These are bean sprouts harvested from the Runt Kingdom. Having been grown in a good environment, the taste and flavor of these bean sprouts cannot be matched by any kingdom.

Minhyuk could only gasp. Most of the special abilities listed under the ingredient were normal. However, the last one truly showed how special the ingredients of the Runt Kingdom were.

‘This is crazy. They can quadruple the rate of getting higher grade dishes?’

The most interesting part was the fact that all of the ingredients from the Runt Kingdom had this ability. High grade dishes were very important. If Minhyuk could serve high grade dishes, then they would be able to obtain better buff effects. But that was not all. It was even mentioned in the description that these bean sprouts tasted very good because of the environment they were grown in.

“Bajie loves his people and his soldiers dearly. He might love to eat on his own, but he also loved to eat together with his people. He often works through the night in hopes of producing better crops and livestock for them to consume. After decades of hard work, they are finally able to produce their desired results,” Xuanzang said as he turned the beads in his hands. “He’s not a bad guy per se. He’s just bad at expressing his own feelings. There’s no need to get angry with each other. You can just ask him to supply the ingredients that you need. There’s no need to make things troublesome.”

Minhyuk nodded. The Buddhist Monk Xuanzang truly had a point.

‘There will obviously be legendary, perhaps even god-grade, ingredients among these excellent ingredients.’

He would also be able to increase his probability of producing high-grade dishes by x4 if he had those ingredients in his hands.

“I understand.”

Minhyuk nodded and headed toward the armory that he came out from just a few moments earlier. He was going to talk with Zhu Bajie and let bygones be bygones.

Zhu Bajie was crying inside the armory. It was partially because of the pain of being hit, but mostly he was lamenting about how his twisted personality caused discord among his allies.

Then, the door opened and a man entered the abandoned armory once again.

“Ahem, ahem.”

Seeing Minhyuk clear his throat and enter once again, Zhu Bajie said, “I’m sorry. I have only considered my pride and have disregarded our people, especially with the situation that we are in. It was very rude, even for me.”

Minhyuk just listened to Bajie’s words.

“I was just very anxious. I thought that this was a fight that we couldn’t win. I know that this is a pathetic excuse but I just wanted to protect my people. I was just very

heartbroken to see the soldiers that once laughed and cried with me die one after another. For a moment, I entertained the thought that if you had not come to Edea, then my people would not die like this. It's just... I'm sorry."

This was very unexpected. When Minhyuk first saw Zhu Bajie, he thought that the king was a cowardly and narrow-minded being. However, after listening to his words, he finally understood why the man acted like that.

Minhyuk was someone that knew how to win a person's heart the best.

'When someone that cannot stand you suddenly treats you kindly.'

People were quite funny. If someone, who was usually nice to others, did something bad once then people would begin scolding him saying, 'Hey, he wasn't as good as I thought he was~' The funny thing was, if a mean and cold person suddenly acted nice to others then they would say, 'Hey, isn't he quite true and kind?'

This was the so-called Give Disease then Give Medicine[1] strategy.

"I understand."

Besides, based on what he learnt, Zhu Bajie was also someone that loved food.

"I have also acted rashly."

Then, Minhyuk took something out of his inventory. It was none other than a gas stove and five bags of ramyeon.

"Let's have a meal. This dish is called ramyeon. It's a precious dish. In fact, I only have five of them left."

The truth was, Minhyuk had around 30,000 packs of ramyeon in his inventory.

"I want to have a meal with you."

"...Ramyon?" Zhu Bajie's interest was piqued. There was a shine in his eyes that made even Minhyuk feel burdened.

Zhu Bajie was literally a pig. There was no better method to win his heart than to offer him food. Besides, Minhyuk was also quite famished especially since he had just finished a high-intensity battle earlier.

Minhyuk turned the gas stove's heat on, placed a pot and began to boil water. Once the water had started boiling, Minhyuk began to pour the packets of ramyeon seasoning.

"It's, it's turning red!" Zhu Bajie shouted, his eyes growing wide from shock.

After adding the flakes, Minhyuk proceeded to add the noodles.

'When it comes to spicy ramyeon, Jjin Ramyeon is always the key.'

Minhyuk smiled faintly as he continued to prepare the ramyeon, doing his best to make it very delicious.

‘Should I leave it as it is and not add anything else?’

Every once in a while, he would feel like ramyeon taste better without the addition of eggs, green onions, cheese or rice cakes. Just like that, the ramyeon that was devoid of any other additional ingredients was completed.

Minhyuk mustered the sweetest smile that he could show as he placed a bowl in front of Zhu Bajie, as well as a side of kimchi. “Here, have a taste.”

After doing so, Minhyuk began to scoop out noodles and soup into a bowl of his own. He grabbed the bowl filled with steaming ramyeon, clamped a mouthful of noodles before slurping everything up.

“Ho—”

He could not help but breathe out to cool down the hot noodles that entered his mouth. After eating several mouthfuls of noodles, he added a few crunchy kimchi in his mouth.

Crunch, crunch, crunch—

“Kghhk...”

Ramyeon truly tasted good. Then, Minhyuk poured soup in his bowl once again.

“Fwaaa!”

The spicy flavor of the soup could easily invoke a breath of admiration to anyone who tasted it.

“Sluuuuuurrrrrp!”

“Sluuuuuuuuuuuuurrp!”

The sound of someone slurping noodles rang loudly inside the empty armory.

Of course, if one ate something spicy, it was only natural that their noses would become runny.

“Snort.”

Zhu Bajie looked at Minhyuk, who blew his nose after eating ramyeon, in shock.

‘How can such a simple dish taste so good?’

Zhu Bajie was someone that loved new, novel and delicious dishes. He felt thrilled. How could a dish that was completed in a mere ten minutes taste so good? But that was not all. Bajie was also very grateful.

‘This is very precious. He only had five bags left...’

For a dish like this, it would definitely be worth as much as it tasted, although Minhyuk had around 30,000 bags in his inventory. However, Zhu Bajie did not know that.

Strangely enough, Zhu Bajie felt good sitting down like this, cooking ramyeon on a gas stove and eating on the floor.

“You’re a good person,” Zhu Bajie said, his snout twitching. “I can’t believe that you’re willing to share something so precious and valuable with me.”

Zhu Bajie viewed food as something important to him. Because of that, this act touched him even more deeply.

Seeing him like this, Minhyuk felt quite relieved. 'If I can forge a friendly relationship with Zhu Bajie and maintain it, then I might be able to obtain a steady supply of ingredients that could quadruple my rate of producing higher grade dishes.'

Just when he was thinking, 'Well then, shall we start to persuade him?'...

['God and Knight' has been randomly triggered!]

['God and Knight' is applying its power on Minhyuk and Zhu Bajie!]

"...?!"

Minhyuk's eyes grew wide.

'Huh? Why did this get triggered?'

It seemed like he would be able to obtain a crazy profit, after all.

Chapter 813

The Origin Authority was the authority possessed by the three most powerful and outstanding gods. Surprising as it might sound, the God and Knight was an Origin Authority that belonged to the greatest god in the game of Athenae.

it was a power that could only be triggered randomly. It could recognize the situation on its own and help a god gain the loyalty of the knight through a variety of methods.

Minhyuk looked at Zhu Bajie, who was very touched to the point that snot ran down his pink pig snout even though it was only five packs of ramyeon.

'This is crazy. I did not expect that things would turn out this way.'

Zhu Bajie was the king of the Runt Kingdom, one that produced ingredients that could quadruple one's chances of producing higher grade dishes. If Zhu Bajie became Minhyuk's knight, then those ingredients would be as good as his. Just the thought alone brought a thrill down his spine.

After slurping up and eating the delicious ramyeon, the deeply moved Zhu Bajie suddenly turned depressed. He looked at Minhyuk and said, "I am trash."

He could clearly imagine the situation outside of this armory.

"Many of my soldiers have died while the rest of them continue to walk the tightrope between life and death until now. Those that have lost their comrades and the parents that have lost their children are probably crying their hearts out." He sighed. "Yet here I am, enjoying food in this place."

Then, additional notifications from the God and Knight rang in Minhyuk's ears.

[The king of the Runt Kingdom is both very sad and anxious. With the power of God and Knight in effect, your words and act of comfort might have a bigger impact on Zhu Bajie.]

At this point, Minhyuk understood the path that he should take. Meanwhile, Zhu Bajie had already lowered his head. If he had to be honest, he was also very, very afraid.

‘I don’t want to die yet.’

He wanted to live longer. After all, there were still plenty of delicious dishes and ingredients in the world, just like the ramyeon that he ate just now, that he had not tasted yet. Seeing Zhu Bajie tremble pitifully like this, one might say that he was a bit too shabby and weak to be considered a king.

Pat—

But then, a warm and gentle hand patted his shoulder. This was the same hand that had just beat him to a pulp just a few moments prior. When Zhu Bajie looked up, he saw a bitter yet soft and gentle smile on the man’s face.

“Scared?” Minhyuk asked, making eye contact with Bajie.

Actually, Minhyuk was very embarrassed. However, he was still willing to do it to win the heart of Zhu Bajie, if it meant getting him and the Runt Kingdom on his side. Besides, Minhyuk’s words would have a greater impact on Zhu Bajie thanks to the effects of the God and Knight.

The bitter smile on Minhyuk’s face grew deeper when he saw Zhu Bajie nod his head.

“To be honest, my kingdom is also currently in the midst of preparing for war.”

“...?”

Zhu Bajie was very shocked when he heard that. If they were preparing for war, then why was he here?

“We have to fight a war against an empire that is so powerful that one would think that it is impossible for us to win. Even so, I still had to come here.”

Of course, it was also necessary to moisten one’s mouth with saliva.

“Because while the residents of Edea are afraid, they still keep on charging forward. I came here for that reason and that reason alone.”

Just like he said, part of the reason why he came here was because the residents of Edea kept on popping up in his mind. There was also the connection that he had forged with Sun Wukong. However, the greatest reason that made Minhyuk come here was because he was confident that he would be able to obtain Edea if he could win this fight. If he got Edea on his side, then he would be able to win the war against the Luvien Empire.

“Are, are you alright?” Zhu Bajie voiced his concerns when he saw Minhyuk’s eyes start to turn red.

“However, I believe that my kingdom will be able to endure and hold out. That’s why, I will protect this place and go back to them.”

Minhyuk, whose eyes had turned red, shed a single tear! Zhu Bajie felt his heart shake when he saw that tear.

'It must have felt very painful to leave his kingdom to come here despite the current situation. He has that firm determination to fulfill his promise to return victorious. This is a great responsibility both as a king and a god.'

Zhu Bajie knew that it was a completely different weight from the one that he carried on his shoulder.

Then, Minhyuk said, "That is why I am here. I will devote myself and do my best to protect you and your beloved Runt Kingdom."

Bang, bang.

Minhyuk thumped his fist on his chest loudly.

"Don't worry. I will make sure to protect you all, even at the cost of my life!!!"

Zhu Bajie felt his heart shake again when he saw the determined expression on Minhyuk's face. Bajie could tell that the man was telling the truth, especially since he had such an innocent look on his face.

'I can't believe that he's shedding tears for his people.'

At the same time, he was also determined to protect the people of Edea. Zhu Bajie stood up as he looked at Minhyuk. He stretched out his pig-like hand and wiped the tear that dripped down Minhyuk's eyes.

If one had to imagine, Zhu Bajie had the face of a pig. And this very same Zhu Bajie was crying while wiping the tear off of Minhyuk's face.

"..."

Minhyuk was left speechless. He could not believe what he was seeing, a pig crying! He was not even crying properly himself to begin with.

"I will do my best to help you gain victory in this place so that you can meet with your people quickly." Zhu Bajie knelt down on one knee. "I will do anything for you, even if it means sacrificing my life!"

[The God and Knight has succeeded!]

[You have acquired God's Third Knight.]

[God's Third Knight 'Zhu Bajie' is the king of the Runt Kingdom, a kingdom that has 890,000 strong troops!]

[The relationship between God and God's Third Knight is a Submissive Relationship.]

[Keep in mind that Zhu Bajie is the king of a nation. If you disappoint him or ask too much of him and his people, then he may leave you.]

[However, if Zhu Bajie suddenly decides to abandon and leave you for no apparent reason, then he will be forced to die.]

Minhyuk smiled faintly as he patted the kneeling Zhu Bajie, who vowed to serve him in tears. "You said that you would do anything?"

Zhu Bajie nodded firmly, determination evident in his eyes.

Then, Minhyuk said, “Then, bring all of the god-grade and legendary grade ingredients from the Runt Kingdom.”

Sun Wukong, Xuaxang, Zhu Bajie and Aaron all turned to Minhyuk and asked, “How many foreigners do you think would come here through the passageway?”

Minhyuk answered, “Over eleven million.”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

Everyone in the room could not help but groan.

The total population of the world was at around eight billion. Based on the available data, around 2.5 billion people had subscribed and were playing Athenae. Of course, there would be plenty of people that had played the game once or twice before giving up and others, who had not accessed the game for a very long time. However, even after excluding those numbers, there would still be around a billion, perhaps more, that were actively playing and enjoying Athenae.

It would be very difficult to pass through the passageway connecting the other continent to Edea. Low and mid-level players would never dare to set foot in the passageway. However, even if only Level 500 high leveled players joined in the game, their numbers would still be huge.

Taking things one step further, even if a lot of them were forced to log out as they challenged the passageway, the number of foreigners that would cross over and enter Edea would definitely be at around eleven million.

The problem was the current troops of Edea’s allied forces had already decreased. They only had around eleven million soldiers on standby. This number would definitely go down since they had to deal with the Heavenly Army that would be sent at set intervals.

“In order to win, we have to do everything that we can,” Minhyuk said as he took out his trailer and started to make large batches of dishes. “We need to narrow the gap between the Heavenly Army and the foreigners.”

The level of the troops of Edea were far higher than the level of the troops back in the continent where the players came from. However, the level of the Heavenly Army far exceeded their levels too.

Beeeeeeeeep—!

Rumbleeeeeee—

Minhyuk, who was cooking inside the trailer that was spewing flames, said, “I have brought a thousand bottles of potions made by the God of Alchemy from Beyond the Heavens and 20,000

high-ranking potions from the other continent. There are also thousands of outstanding explosives and traps made by God's Trap Installer, as well as artifacts and defensive equipment."

This showed how much Minhyuk had prepared for this war.

"Namo Amitabha Buddha..."

Xuanzang spun the beads in his hand.

'Has he poured everything into this?'

The amount of things that Minhyuk was giving to the troops of Edea was not something that a simple kingdom could have. Minhyuk had done his preparations by spending all of the funds on his hands, as well as the money that he borrowed from Calauhel.

'If we win, we will be able to gain a profit that's several times more than what I have invested.'

That was why he did not consider this to be a waste. That was not all. Minhyuk had his dishes as well. They only had ten more days left. Before Minhyuk came here, he had countless discussions with the Tower of Knowledge's God of Tactics Jarrod and Dwarf Olger. He also had several conversations with Ilhwa Construction's president, Roadol.

Preparations had to be done. The millions of residents of Edea and the more than four million troops worked together to create something that would help them in their fight against the Jade Emperor.

Just like that, a day has gone by.

"This is ridiculous..."

"It's just a simple dish, so why are we getting this much power from it?"

"If it's like this, then I feel like I can even twist the necks of the soldiers of the Heavenly Army!"

The soldiers, who had seen the dishes created with the Runt Kingdom's ingredients that could quadruple the rate of producing higher grade dishes, were impressed.

Three days later.

"Thank you for the food."

"This is truly an amazing dish."

"Namo Amitabha Buddha..."

The kings ate the outstanding dishes that Minhyuk had made for them.

After a week had gone by.

“...”

“...”

“...”

The residents, soldiers and kings of Edea were shocked to see the trailer still spewing out flames.

“It seems like he is the only one that could truly save Edea.” Xuanzang smiled as he thought about something else.

‘Perhaps, the person that is with you might also be another savior.’

Buddhist Monk Xuanzang was a person with very special abilities. He could see through the essence of a person and even know of their limitations. Sometimes he could help them break through those limits and gain new power. He was also a very mysterious being that could, at times, lift the seal on one’s power temporarily.

While Minhyuk was cooking in the trailer, Obren’s voice, which sounded half worried and half nagging, rang out.

—Take a day off. Rest is also a form of preparation for war. This idiot king.

Minhyuk was happy to hear his voice, especially the warmth that was veiled by his scathing remarks.

“We’ve already come this far, Obren. Perhaps I might truly become an emperor.”

Although Minhyuk sounded very optimistic, Obren could feel the pressure weighing down on the boy even from inside the seasoning jar.

‘Can he do it? Can he really become an emperor?’

As he listened to Minhyuk’s words, Obren wondered if he could aid the boy in this goal.

A dark-haired handsome young man could be seen sitting on top of a high hill overlooking Edea. This man was none other than Obren. He came out of the seasoning jar for a while after waking up from his slumber.

In the ten days or so that passed by, the trailer only stopped spewing flames for two days.

“Idiot,” Obren muttered, a small smile curling at the corners of his lips.

The boy had always been like that ever since the first time they met. No matter what it was, he would make sure to do his best even if it took a toll on his body. Of course, he always made the impossible possible.

At the same time, Obren thought, ‘I want to protect you here.’

In this place, there was no Brod, no Spear God Ben, and no Sword of the Gods Luo. Just as the thought flashed in his head, he heard a voice.

“The friendship between you two is amazing.”

Xuanzang stood right next to Obren, as their eyes made contact while he turned the beads in one of his hands.

“Why are you here?”

“You’re asking me why I came here? Isn’t it more appropriate to say that you have been waiting for me to come here?”

Obren turned silent for a moment when he heard Xuanzang’s words. It was the truth. He was truly waiting here, for Xuanzang, who possessed special powers.

But before they could discuss such matters, Xuanzang asked, “I want to hear your story. The story of how the Evil God became friends with the human king.”

Obren frowned as he looked at Xuanzang. However, he did not hate the fact that the monk was asking about their story, and he began to talk.

“When I first met him, I was in the form of a Grumpy Gochujang.”

A smile bloomed and stayed on Obren’s face as he narrated their story.

“Every time I see that brat move a step forward, I feel very happy and proud,” Obren spoke, his eyes watching Minhyuk.

“Whenever he felt sad, I would also feel sad.”

Buddhist Monk Xuanzang silently stood there and listened to his story.

“Whenever he felt happy, I would also feel happy.”

Obren looked down at his hands. The true power of the Evil God was slumbering in his body.

‘If only I have that power again.’

“That’s why I would do anything as long as I can protect that child.”

A faint smile appeared on Xuanzang’s face. It was truly an interesting and wonderful friendship.

“Well then, let’s hear what you have planned.”

Obren looked at Xuanzang once again. Xuanzang had always been watching him even though he was with Minhyuk. It was only natural that Obren would feel his gaze.

“I heard that there are nine Absolute Gods in the world.”

Obren nodded.

“The Jade Emperor, the god protecting Edea, may very well be the tenth Absolute God.”

It coincided with what Obren thought of before. However, since this world was on a different map, the people would only think that there were nine Absolute Gods.

Xuanzang looked around Edea for a while before turning to look at Obren once again. Then, he said, “You should become the tenth Absolute God.”

Chapter 814

[The morale of Edea's Allied Troops has reached the skies!]

[The Edea's Allied Troops are deifying you.]

[Your divinity has increased slightly.]

“Waaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

“Minhyuk! Minhyuk! Minhyuk!”

Loud and hot cheers resonated throughout Edea.

Minhyuk cooked for a total of twelve days. The first ones that he cooked for and fed were the builders, trap installers, and the blacksmiths. After they had eaten the meal, they immediately went on to create a new fortress using the designs and blueprints provided by Golden Hammer Lant's disciple Olger and the president of Ilhwa Construction Roadol.

After that, Minhyuk continued to cook, producing large batches of high grade dishes in those twelve days.

[You have made more than thirty legendary grade dishes.]

[You have achieved the Easter Egg: Continuously Creating Something and Achieving Something that Even the Gods Could Not Do.]

[You have created 31 legendary grade dishes, 864 epic grade dishes, 18,413 unique grade dishes, 201,346 rare grade dishes.]

[As a reward for obtaining an easter egg, the buff effects of the dishes that you made since you started cooking for this period, whether they have been consumed or not, will be 15% better.]

It was a stroke of good luck. It was as if to cheer Minhyuk on by improving the buff effects of the dishes after he finished his twelve-day nonstop cooking fiesta.

Minhyuk looked at the residents of Edea, who were cheering loudly around him. In a few days, the players that had been recruited by the Jade Emperor would come to this continent.

“Make sure that you accomplish it.”

“Please be safe and come back soon.”

Minhyuk was now ready to go to Hell.

‘The Sword of Aeon.’

He wanted to lift the Sword of Aeon's second seal. A war was about to break out, but he had to leave.

‘If I succeed in lifting the Sword of Aeon's second seal, then it will definitely be a huge variable that can change the tide of this war.’

The high rankers had definitely analyzed Minhyuk and planned several countermeasures to his powers. Besides, Minhyuk was the player with the highest level. This meant that he had little to no

improvement just by leveling up alone. After all, it would take a lot for someone at his level to increase his level by one.

However, once the second seal of the Sword of Aeon was lifted, Minhyuk could become the biggest variable in this war.

That was not all. There was also another reason for him to unseal the Sword of Aeon.

‘If can lift the Sword of Aeon’s second seal, then I might be able to confront the Jade Emperor’s envoys.’

Minhyuk was the commander and the leader of the allied forces. He was the one that had to deal with the Jade Emperor’s envoys. However, with how he was right now, victory might just be a pipe dream. Before Minhyuk came to Edea, he had asked Ascar for a parchment that would grant him access to Hell.

Riiiiip—

A huge door, with an unknown skeleton above, appeared in front of him after he ripped the parchment apart.

Vwooooooooooong—

A dark, stale wind blew out of the door when he opened it. However, just as he was about to step inside, Obren suddenly appeared from the Puzzling Seasoning Jar. Minhyuk looked at Obren in confusion.

However, the dark-haired handsome Obren said, “I have something else to do.”

These past few days, Minhyuk had seen Obren and Xuanzang talk. Perhaps that was the reason for his departure. If he were to be honest, Minhyuk wanted Obren by his side on the journey to Hell, which showed how much the young man relied on the Evil God.

“I’m worried.”

Obren was very worried. The two of them might be bickering every single day but they truly cared for each other.

“If, by any chance, you feel that you’re in danger, then...

“What are you going on about?”

Obren shook his head before Minhyuk could even finish his words.

“The thing that I’m going to do is for my sake. What do you mean by dangerous, huh?” Obren smiled arrogantly. “I am the Evil God.”

Evil God Obren had threatened the entire human race in the past.

Minhyuk smiled bitterly. “Right. I understand.”

Xuanzang was a man with a strange power. Originally, Obren could not roam around outside the seasoning jar and could only go somewhere in the vicinity of the jar after he awakened. However, the power of Buddhist Monk Xuanzang made it possible.

Minhyuk turned around and entered the Hell's Gate, while Obren walked in the opposite direction. Then, Obren stopped in his tracks.

"Minhyuk."

"..."

This was the first time that Obren had called him by his name. Usually, he would call Minhyuk, 'Hey, stupid idiot' or something along those lines.

When Minhyuk turned back to look at him, he saw Obren opening and closing his mouth repeatedly. Then, a small smile bloomed on the handsome man's face.

"Don't get hurt."

"You too."

Obren stood next to Xuanzang as he watched Minhyuk enter the Hell's Gate, his eyes lingering on the place where the young man had disappeared from for a very long time.

Special Players Management Team.

Team Leader Park Minggyu's expression was complicated as he watched Minhyuk and Obren go on their separate paths.

"No way. I never expected Xuanzang to propose something like this."

It was just like what Xuanzang had said, the Jade Emperor was the tenth Absolute God. However, since he was in a different world from the other Absolute Gods, his existence was not widely known.

If Xuanzang and Obren's plans truly came to fruition, then Obren would probably become the newest addition to the Absolute Gods.

"The one that's beside a player, becoming an Absolute God..."

It was quite a scary thought. Of course, on the other hand, it could also be considered a pretty interesting development. However, there was still some time left before it could happen.

For now, Team Leader Park had to focus on something else. Player Minhyuk had crossed the gates of Hell.

"The God of Death is the most vicious and stubborn among all of the gods."

"That's correct."

So far, Minhyuk had always forged friendships and connections with all of the people that he met through his journey. The prime example of this was the Battle God, someone that initially did not like and even opposed Minhyuk. However, since then, he had Minhyuk become his successor, and was even one of his staunch supporters and firm believers.

However, the God of Death was different. It was probably impossible for Minhyuk to make friends with him.

“Team Leader, there’s something that I’m worried about.”

“What is it?”

“Among the God of Death’s blessings, there’s a blessing that can enhance and reinforce weapons, right?”

“...!”

Team Leader Park’s eyes grew wide when he realized this problem. That was right. The God of Death had a great power that allowed him to succeed in reinforcing any kind of weapon without fail. This was a power that was only given to three of the most outstanding gods. It was one of the Origin Authorities, ‘The One that Advances.’

“If the Sword of Aeon received a +3 because of The One that Advances, then...?”

Team Leader Park’s mouth turned dry. It had not happened yet. He had to focus on his work first. By the time they were about to clock off, Park Minggyu suddenly grew curious about Minhyuk’s location. So, he turned to Lee Minhwa and asked, “Where’s Player Minhyuk now?”

“Please wait a moment.”

Tap, tap, tap—

After a few taps, Lee Minhwa looked up at the monitor to check the situation. Her eyes then grew wide from shock. “He, he’s in the Barren Land.”

“The Barren Land...?”

The Barren Land was a very dangerous place in Hell. However, there were surprising things to eat in this dry and barren land.

“Wasn’t Hella in that place...?”

Hell had a character called Hella. Who was she?

“That’s right. The God of Death’s sweetheart is there.”

What would people think whenever they heard the word ‘Hell’? Most people would think that it was a dry, barren land where the dead lived, a place that was worthy of fear. Some would also imagine a place that was filled with decaying corpses and scattered skeletons, emitting a rotten stench. There was no one in the world who would think of something nice when they heard the word ‘Hell.’

There was a consistent and common theme all throughout Hell. It was death. No crops, trees, grass, or even weed would grow in Hell. The only things that existed in Hell were the rotten and the dead. The reason was this special dry and cracked land, a place so dry that it was called the Barren Land. There were four Sin’s Ingredients hidden inside the Barren Land.

The Sin’s Ingredients were all buried deep underground. They were the reason for Hell’s night-uninhabitable environment. Monsters from Hell would often resort to eating each other or drinking rotten and contaminated water.

Hella, the first God of Farming, was located in this very same Barren Land.

The first God of Farming had given up her seat to her successors way back, so she could take a rest. In fact, it was such a long time ago that she could not even remember when exactly it happened. She had come to Hell in hopes of changing this place. The beings living in Hell obviously wanted to eat fresh crops and healthy livestock too. That was why she had hoped to make it happen.

However, it had already been hundreds, perhaps even thousands of years since she came here to dig the Sin's Ingredient out of the ground.

Crack—!

Thud, thud—!

Baaaaaaaang—!

Hella dug the ground around the Sin's Radish that was buried deeply in the ground. However, even though she was working hard, she had remained unsuccessful for thousands of years in her endeavor. That was even considering the fact that Hella used to be the God of Farming.

First and foremost, the conditions to dig up the ingredients were far too demanding. If one's hoe touched even just a part of the Sin's Radish, the harvesting rate would plummet to 0%. In other words, even if one had already reached 80% harvesting rate, they would return to 0% if they touched the Sin's Radish by mistake during the process.

That was not all. The soil that surrounded the Sin's Radish would also move to squeeze the radish deeper the moment anyone started to dig it out. If one could not overcome the squeezing rate for a certain amount of time, the harvesting rate would return to 0% after twenty seconds.

Hella had not been able to make any progress even after working hard for thousands of years.

Thuuud—!

Hella wore a straw hat and a cotton coat, items usually worn by farmers, and tried her hardest to dig the ingredient to the point that she was covered in mud. Even though she was wearing what farmers usually wore, her beauty could not be hidden. It was comparable to that of Saintess Loyna. However, despite her beauty and hard work, the time was still up and the ground had started to cover the radish once again.

'I will never give up!'

Hella had been doing this for thousands of years. However, she had never given up even once.

'The promise that I made with him... I will make sure that I will keep it!'

"It will only be possible if I can harvest this Sin's Ingredient but..."

However, for her to be able to dig out the rest of the ingredients, she had to first harvest the Sin's Radish in front of her. After all, the main role of the Sin's Radish was to prevent others from digging the other ingredients.

'If only I have a higher DEX...'

The problem was Hella's DEX. Just because she was once the God of Farming did not mean that she had extremely high DEX. Of course, Hella had been digging this radish for thousands of years.

That constant, repetitive action would have definitely increased her DEX at a rapid pace. Unfortunately, Hell was a land where the dead lived, and the dead could not grow. That was the reason why she had been stuck in this place for that long.

With a bitter look on her face, Hella headed toward a cottage not far from where she was digging.

“Someday...”

‘I will be able to do it.’

Maybe it would take forever, but she believed she would be able to do it.

How long had she been asleep? Hella did not know. She stretched her body as she slowly got up in a mechanical fashion. True to her routine, she stood up once again to dig up the Sin’s Radish that she had not harvested and perhaps would not be able to harvest for thousands of years more to come.

She grabbed her hoe and headed toward the Barren Land. However, when she arrived there, Hella could not help but tilt her head in confusion. There was a delicious and tantalizing smell wafting from somewhere, one that she had never once experienced in her thousand years of living in Hell.

Hella’s eyes suddenly grew wide after walking for quite some time. “Heok...?!”

She could see that the Sin’s Radish had disappeared. Not too far from the place where the radish had been buried was a man sitting in front of a table and eating something.

“Kyaaa. Beef and radish soup is best paired with rice, no? Of course, that’s right. Keuhahahahahaha!”

“Wh-what...?”

Hella could not hide her confusion.

‘That is impossible, right? There is no way that the radish on the man’s spoon that he is bringing to his mouth is the Sin’s Radish, right?’

Then, her train of thought continued.

‘Did...did he make beef and radish soup using the Sin’s Radish?!’

Chapter 815

Hell looked exactly how Minhyuk imagined it to be. The land was completely barren and there was a sticky, unpleasant humidity and a terrible stench that lingered at the tip of one’s nose.

Upon reaching Hell to meet the God of Death, Minhyuk realized he was facing one huge difficulty.

‘Where is the God of Death?’

Minhyuk did not know where the God of Death was. Left with no choice, he continued to walk around cluelessly.

[Ingredient Search is successful!]

[You will be guided to the Sin's Radish!]

The Ingredient Search skill was amazing, automatically searching and finding special and rare ingredients within one kilometer radius of the user.

Growl—

The notification came at the perfect time, as Minhyuk had just started to become hungry. Since Hell was a barren and dry land, Minhyuk thought that maybe the ingredients in this place were quite special. When it came to radish, there was one dish that would always come to mind. It was none other than beef and radish soup.

There was once when he went home very, very hungry. He saw a pot in the kitchen. Inside, was the beef and radish soup that his mom had made. Whenever they did not have anything to eat at home, they would just cook some beef and radish soup, and eat it together with some rice and kimchi.

Gulp—

Just imagining the taste of the soup was enough to whet Minhyuk's appetite. His stomach growling, Minhyuk stepped toward the place where the Sin's Radish was.

[You have entered the Barren Land.]

[The Barren Land is known to be the driest, emptiest and most dangerous place in Hell.]

[You have gained 200 REP.]

[You have gained 10 CHA.]

Minhyuk, who had been walking along and following the guidance of the Ingredient Search skill, entered the place known as Barren Land. When he looked around, all he saw was a land that was more parched and arid than the rest of Hell.

However, the radish that he was seeking for was in this very place. When he saw the radish, Minhyuk felt that it was mystifying. The black aura that was emanating from the radish felt rather strange.

The Ingredient Search skill allowed Minhyuk to read through the information of the ingredients. Upon utilizing it, Minhyuk would be able to check the information of the ingredient that he was being guided to.

Of course, Minhyuk had already checked the Sin's Radish's information.

(Sin's Radish)

Ingredient Grade: Medicine

Special Abilities:

- All stats will increase by 0.5%.
- Attack will increase by 3% when fighting against monsters from Hell.
- Additional 1% increase in all stats upon eating all of the Sin's Ingredients.

Description: Sin's Radish, together with the other Sin's Ingredients, possess the power to prevent life in Hell. Only after you have dug up the Sin's Radish will you be able to dig for the other Sin's Ingredients. On top of that, it is very difficult to dig up the Sin's Radish.

The 0.5% increase in all stats and the 3% increase in attack when facing monsters from Hell were incredible. On top of that, one would also be able to obtain an additional 1% increase in all stats once all the Sin's Ingredients had been consumed. It was just like wearing a set artifact.

'This is a one of a kind ingredient.'

Minhyuk smiled happily as he grabbed the Sin's Radish and pulled it up to collect it.

[Sin's Radish cannot be harvested normally.]

He had already expected this but he still tried it just in case. In the end, Minhyuk took out his hoe and began to carefully dig out the Sin's Radish.

[Harvest Rate: 4%]

[Harvest Rate: 7%]

[Harvest Rate: 13%...]

Minhyuk was taken aback. He possessed a very high DEX stat after all, and it was because of that high DEX that he was able to always get the 'best' whenever he harvested any ingredient. However, the harvest rate of Sin's Radish definitely was the worst he had come across so far.

'It's only at 20%?'

When his harvest rate reached 25%, a new set of notifications rang out.

[A light pressure has been applied to the Sin's Radish.]

[The harvest rate of Sin's Radish will be reset to 0%.]

"Oh my god..."

Minhyuk gave the Sin's Radish an incredulous look. The light pressure was referring to the slight vibration that transferred to the body of the Sin's Radish while he was digging around it, yet this minor disturbance had caused his efforts to go to waste. Just like that, the soil that he had dug and scooped up earlier disappeared and returned to the area where it was before.

Minhyuk gave it another try. This time, he tried to harvest the ingredient by digging around as carefully as possible. After he achieved a 60% harvest rate within twenty seconds, he was greeted with another notification.

[Twenty seconds have passed since you tried to harvest the Sin's Radish.]

[Since you went beyond the specified time, the harvest rate of Sin's Radish will be reset to 0%.]

"...Eh?"

Minhyuk could not help but feel frustrated. The harvesting of the Sin's Radish was far too demanding. First, the harvest rate could only increase by pitiful amounts and the slightest touch to the body would instantly reset the harvest rate to 0%. Not only that, once twenty seconds had passed, the harvest rate would also be reset to 0%.

‘Can this even be harvested?’

Even for Minhyuk, who was a cut beyond the rest in terms of harvesting crops, was very flustered. The biggest problem was the small increase in the harvest rate. He was only able to reach 60% in twenty seconds.

‘A normal farmer would probably have a hard time achieving even a 10% harvest rate in the same amount of time.’

Even though there were quite a few setbacks, Minhyuk was not one to give up. He tried several more times and of course, suffered each and every single time.

“Hmm.”

Minhyuk rubbed his chin in thought. The 0.5% increase in all stats after consuming the Sin’s Radish made it an outstanding ingredient. He was sure that its flavor would also be amazing. In other words, Minhyuk had to get his hands on it.

Hence, he took out a bottle of potion made by Mandala. This potion was the Proficient One’s Elixir, an overpowered elixir that could double the DEX of the person who consumed it for around two minutes. Using this bottle of potion, which Minhyuk only had one bottle of, seemed appropriate for the occasion.

‘The Proficient One’s Elixir is precious too but the increase in all stats that the Sin’s Radish would give me has much greater allure than that.’

Anyway, once he consumed this potion, Minhyuk’s DEX would double for two minutes. He chugged the purple liquid in one go.

[You have consumed The Proficient One’s Elixir.]

[Your DEX will double for two minutes.]

There was no time to waste. Minhyuk immediately grabbed his hoe and dug the ground around the Sin’s Radish.

[You have dug the best part of the land using your hoe.]

[Your ability has surpassed even that of the God of Dexterity.]

[The hoe that you swing will help you in harvesting the ingredient. It will help you to avoid damage and dig accurately based on the requirements of the ingredient that you are harvesting.]

The most important thing when harvesting was not damaging the crop itself.

Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud!

Minhyuk, accompanied by the sound of hoe hitting the ground, worked carefully but quickly around the Sin’s Radish.

[Your Harvest Rate has increased by 15%...]

[Your Harvest Rate has increased by 16%...]

[Your Harvest Rate has increased by 14%...]

His harvest rate rose at a rapid pace. However, just because the rate increased did not mean that everything would go without a hitch. After all, everyone could make a mistake. Minhyuk's hoe landed at a wrong spot, the blade of his hoe almost hitting the Sin's Radish.

[Your shockingly high DEX that surpassed even that of the God of Dexterity has made up for your mistake!]

Thuuuud—

Minhyuk's hoe automatically swerved and avoided the Sin's Radish, hitting the ground right next to it.

[You have successfully harvested the Sin's Radish!]

[Wonderful job!]

“...?”

Minhyuk was dumbfounded when he saw the notifications that rang after he successfully harvested the Sin's Radish. It was almost too cheery over such a simple matter. However, he realized after hearing the following notifications that it was not just about picking this one radish.

[The Sin's Radish has been buried in the ground for who knows how long, sucking up all of the nutrients in Hell.]

[By harvesting Sin's Radish, you are now eligible to harvest the other Sin's Ingredients.]

After thinking about it carefully, Minhyuk realized that it was understandable. After all, it was truly too difficult to harvest even for someone like him, who had an extremely high level of DEX.

Swoosh—

The black aura that was seeping from the Sin's Radish also disappeared after it had been pulled out. Minhyuk looked at the thick and solid Sin's Radish that looked very good to eat.

“Kghhk...” He let out a small burst of admiration as he began to cook.

Minhyuk peeled the Sin's Radish and chopped its white and fine bulb into bite-sized pieces before heating the pot. Once the pot was heated, he drizzled some sesame oil and added some beef for the soup.

Sizzleeeee—

Minhyuk immediately grabbed his chopsticks to stir the beef to stop it from sticking to the pot. It sizzled the moment it came into contact with the hot sesame oil. Then, he sprinkled some pepper before adding the Sin's Radish and stir-frying everything together. After frying to a certain extent, he added water and let it boil. Beef and radish soup was tasty when cooked well. Minhyuk would, of course, do his best to cook it well.

After making the beef and radish soup, Minhyuk quickly finished setting up his table. He sprinkled some green onions on top of the well-boiled and steaming beef and radish soup and served some kimchi, seaweed and rice on the side.

The first thing that Minhyuk did was to scoop a huge spoonful of rice and place it in his mouth. The freshly cooked rice was still steaming and tasted sweet. Then, he immediately took a sip of the beef and radish soup.

“Kghhk...”

Minhyuk gave himself a pat on the back for seasoning that beef and radish soup very well. After that, he quickly scooped some rice together with some of the beef and radish soup and placed everything in his mouth. The combination of the sweet rice, the well-seasoned beef, and radish soup created a fantastic flavor that danced in his mouth.

He once again scooped another spoonful of the beef and radish soup and placed it in his mouth. The radish was boiled well, its soft texture easy to chew and quickly disappeared down Minhyuk’s mouth, which was immediately followed by the superb taste of the meat. Then, he ate another spoonful, this time with a bite of kimchi on the side.

“Kyaa!!!”

Minhyuk was impressed with the combination of flavors. Next, he scooped a spoonful of the soup but instead of kimchi, he added the salty and savory seaweed on top. When he put everything in his mouth, the savory flavor of the seaweed instantly melted with the beef and radish soup, creating a wonderful harmony of flavors.

Minhyuk smiled happily as he made sure that he did not leave a single drop left and completely emptied the pot. He leaned back in satisfaction after hearing the 0.5% increase in all of his stats and the 3% increase in attack when facing Hell’s monsters.

“Did, did you make beef and radish soup using the Sin’s Radish?”

At that moment, an unknown voice rang in his ears. When Minhyuk turned around, he saw a beautiful woman wearing a straw hat and holding a hoe in her hands.

[The First God of Farming Hella has appeared!]

[You have gained 500 REP.]

[You have gained 10 CHA.]

‘The First God of Farming?’

Minhyuk looked at the woman in doubt. Why was the first God of Farming in this place?

Hella’s body trembled. If one was in her shoes, they would probably also be giving a similar reaction. After all, she had been trying for thousands of years to dig up the Sin’s Radish. However, the man in front of her not only dug up the Sin’s Radish, but he even turned it into beef and radish soup.

“Hello!”

Hella felt her temples throb when the man greeted her brightly. She was choked up with anger for a moment. However, she could not just burst out and reprimand the man. In the end, the Sin’s Radish did not belong to anybody. In fact, if she took a step back and looked at it rationally, it was a good thing. The man had dug up the Sin’s Radish for her and made her life easier.

After greeting the first God of Farming politely, Minhyuk turned around to leave. He thought, 'I'm full for now. I'll go and meet with the Priest of Death first and solve my matters before harvesting the rest of the Sin's Ingredients.'

His most pressing matter was lifting the seal of the Sword of Aeon.

However, Hella turned restless when she saw Minhyuk preparing to leave. It was natural.

'He was able to harvest the Sin's Radish, an ingredient that I couldn't harvest for the longest time. Perhaps he might be able to harvest the other ingredients too?'

Hella hurriedly stopped Minhyuk, "W-wait...!"

"Yes?" Minhyuk stopped in his tracks and turned to look at her in doubt.

"Are you just going to go like that? Even though there are plenty of delicious Sin's Ingredients left?"

"Ah."

Minhyuk instantly understood the situation when he saw Hella's expression. There was expectation! The look of someone that wanted something from him! He could not help but chuckle to himself when he saw that.

'Huh? If I do this well, then...'

This woman was the first God of Farming after all, perhaps he would be able to reap a lot of benefits.

Hella smiled awkwardly. She did not need the Sin's Ingredients. However, she wanted to get rid of them and allow the dry and barren Hell to soak up the rain and shower it with abundance. From what she could see, the young man in front of her seemed to be exactly what she needed to help with the process.

"Ah. I'm a bit busy, you see. I have to meet with the God of Death. Then, I have to go to the bathroom, and then sleep."

Minhyuk had completely grasped what usually went through the heads of people that wanted something from others. There was a high chance that the first God of Farming had rare and good ingredients in her hands. So, he had to play his cards right.

Minhyuk then turned around as if he was not interested in what Hella had to say. Seeing him move away like that, Hella hurriedly shouted, "The-the God of Death? I know him well! I will introduce you to him!"

Minhyuk, who had taken a few steps, suddenly stopped in his tracks. Then, he grinned and asked, "What did you say you would do for me?"

"If you help me harvest the Sin's Ingredients, I will introduce you to the God of Death and give you the excellent crops that I have harvested in my lifetime."

Ring!

[Hidden Quest: Hella's Request.]

Rank: SSS

Requirements: The One that Received Hella's Request.

Rewards: Three God-grade Cooking Ingredients.

Penalty for Failure: Getting kicked out of hell.

Description: The First God of Farming Hella has a small wish. She hopes to harvest all of the Sin's Ingredients buried deep in the Barren Land and let those living in Hell be able to feel full. You can obtain one God-grade ingredient for every Sin's Ingredient you harvest if you choose to help her.

'Did you just say three God-grade ingredients...?'

Minhyuk's eyes narrowed to crescents. This was practically a pie from the sky.

Chapter 816

Whether it was an artifact material or a cooking ingredient, as long as it reached God-grade, its value would soar and be considered as a valuable treasure. Of course, cooking ingredients had lower value compared to artifact materials at the same grade. After all, artifacts could display permanent effects.

However, that was not the only reason why God-grade cooking ingredients were of lower value compared to other materials of a similar grade. Basically, the way to cook God-grade ingredients was not that difficult. On top of that, God-grade ingredients were constantly being released with the increase in level of the players. Interestingly, the value of God-grade cooking ingredients was still very high.

Right now, the quest Hella's Request popped up in front of Minhyuk, and he even stood to obtain three God-grade ingredients!

'Acquiring these three God-grade ingredients will help me in protecting Edea this time. It might become one of the big variables in this battle!'

Of course, it was important for him to lift the second seal of the Sword of Aeon. However, acquiring these three God-grade ingredients was equally important.

Amidst all these, there was one thing that Minhyuk was very curious about.

"You said that you know the God of Death, right? How did you know him?"

Hella smiled bitterly. After a few moments of hesitation, she said, "I'm his lover."

"..."

Lover? Perhaps it was only natural. Gods were just like humans. They also had emotions, and could also feel and love.

'Keok! If— if she's an ex-girlfriend then... wouldn't that make it even worse?'

When lovers separated, they would usually grow apart and sometimes, the relationship might even sour.

But then, Hella said, "I can guide you to where the God of Death is and I can also lend you a hand so that you won't die right away when you meet him!"

“Did you just say die?”

“The God of Death always kills any outsider. So, if you appear right in front of him, there’s a chance that he might kill you on the spot.”

“Ah...”

Minhyuk did not know where the God of Death was. But after knowing that the God of Death would attack him on the spot if he suddenly appeared in front of him, then it was probably for the best that he went there with Hella.

[You have accepted the Hidden Quest: Hella’s Request]

“What’s the second Sin’s Ingredient?”

“The second Sin’s Ingredient is pumpkin sweet potato.”

“...!”

Minhyuk was delighted to hear what it was. Sweet potato was an amazing ingredient. It tasted good whether steamed or roasted over a fire. It was also good when made into caramelized sweet potato or added into dishes like braised chicken or spicy braised chicken.

“Pumpkin sweet potato! Huwooooo!”

“...?”

Hella thought that the young man in front of her was quite unusual. The man had just been making a serious face just now before entering into a deal with her, but now, he was smiling purely like an innocent child.

“Do I have to dig for the sweet potato like before?”

Hella shook her head. “I have no idea either.”

Hella never had the chance to try and harvest the second Sin’s Ingredient.

The two looked around. Even though the Sin’s Sweet Potato was buried deep underground, they could still see the black aura that seeped out of the ground and floated right above where it was. Minhyuk quickly approached the black aura and swung his hoe down on where the sweet potato was.

[You have started the harvest of the Second Sin’s Ingredient, the Sin’s Sweet Potato.]

[To harvest the Sin’s Sweet Potato, you need to harvest a total of 20,000 sweet potatoes in three days.]

The surroundings suddenly changed right as the notifications finished ringing in their ears. From the dry and barren land from before, it suddenly turned into a wide and thriving sweet potato field.

“...!”

“...!”

Hella and Minhyuk were both shocked. In Hella's case, she was shocked to hear that they needed to harvest 20,000 sweet potatoes in three days.

'In just three days? That's impossible.'

Of course, she had the help of the man in front of her. However, Hella thought that it was still an impossible feat. When she saw Minhyuk's shaking body, she thought, 'Are you thinking what I'm thinking?'

However, Minhyuk's thoughts were completely different from hers.

"If I can harvest all 20,000 sweet potatoes, then does that mean that they'll all be mine?"

"..."

"Isn't this a really good quest?"

The way Minhyuk sounded so optimistic and positive about their situation left Hella quite speechless.

Thus, the two began to dig for sweet potatoes.

With Hella and Minhyuk's high DEX, it was not that hard to harvest the sweet potatoes. On top of that, Hella also had a variety of helpful harvesting skills.

"Hundred Hoes."

Thuuuuud—

The sweet potatoes in her vicinity squeezed out of the ground the moment she swung the hoe in her hands. Just like that, Hella was able to harvest the sweet potatoes at a rapid pace.

While she harvested the sweet potatoes, she turned to look back at the young man beside her. To her surprise, the young man named Minhyuk was working much faster than her.

'Crazy.'

Hella had a guess how the man beside her was able to harvest the Sin's Radish. The sweet potatoes around them would usually be harvested after three swings of an ordinary hoe. However, Minhyuk could easily dig it up with just a swing. That was not all, he was also moving rapidly all the while roasting a pile of sweet potatoes wrapped in foil underneath the blazing flames of burning firewood.

"Pumpkin sweet potato! Uwooh!"

Thud, thud, thud—!

Minhyuk looked happy as he swung his hoe continuously and dug the sweet potatoes in front of him. This was his only chance of obtaining 20,000 sweet potatoes in three days.

About an hour later, there was a notification.

[You have gained 1 DEX.]

The beings from Hell could not grow further. Actually, this statement was not quite true. It was better to say that the dead could not grow. Minhyuk was faintly aware that Hella was already dead. However, compared to finding out the truth of the matter, he was more desperate to dig and eat the sweet potatoes.

After digging for quite some time, Minhyuk approached the burning firewood that had been roasting the pile of sweet potatoes since earlier. Then, using the Sword of Aeon, he speared one of the sweet potatoes and took it out of the fire. Perhaps, those that sealed the Sword of Aeon would be both astonished and dismayed to see the greatest sword being used as a stick to take out sweet potatoes from a fire.

“Hot! Hot!”

The mouth-watering golden color of the sweet potato greeted Minhyuk after he peeled off both the hot foil and the burnt skin of the root crop. He then carefully blew on the steaming flesh of the sweet potato before taking a huge bite.

“Hoo—”

The heat instantly spread in Minhyuk’s mouth the moment he took a bite, forcing him to roll the sweet potato all around his mouth. Once the heat dissipated to some extent, the sweetness of the sweet potato began to slowly spread out.

“De-delicious! I’m going to eat more. Sweet potato!!!”

Minhyuk returned to the field to work once again with his right hand holding the hoe and his left hand holding a steaming sweet potato. Hella could not help but inhale sharply when she saw this ridiculous scene.

“Haa... Haa...”

Hella, who had used a lot of her skills during that hour, was able to harvest 300 sweet potatoes. If she was harvesting an ordinary sweet potato, then she would probably be able to harvest around 2,000 in the same amount of time. However, this was Sin’s Sweet Potato, and harvesting it was far more difficult than harvesting ordinary sweet potatoes.

The 20,000 quota in three days seemed possible considering that she could harvest 300 in an hour. However, after taking into account the recovery time of her mana and the cooldown of her skills, she realized that it was far from enough.

Hella, who was left exhausted and out of breath, suddenly thought of Minhyuk once again. She turned to look back at him.

“...!”

To her shock, Minhyuk was able to harvest around 500 sweet potatoes in an hour. On top of that, his speed had increased by about 1.6x since he started digging for sweet potatoes. This was all thanks to the Divine Will skill.

[The skill: Divine Will has been triggered.]

[All of your skills and abilities related to DEX will temporarily increase by 30%.]

[All stats will temporarily increase by 8%. Attack and defense will temporarily increase by 6%.]

The passive skill Divine Will was much easier to trigger than the previous skill Will. He only needed to exert a quarter of the usual effort that he otherwise usually need. It would also boost all stats, as well as the attack and defense of the skill user.

That was not all, if Divine Will was triggered three times in a row, the DEX would increase by around 60%. In other words, Minhyuk did not grow tired.

Thud— thud— thud—

It was as if Minhyuk was given wings. He dug non-stop, the sweet potatoes piling up into a mountain behind him.

By the second hour...

[You have gained 1 DEX.]

By the third hour...

[You have gained 1 DEX.]

[You have harvested 2,000 sweet potatoes!]

By the fifth hour...

[You have gained 1 DEX.]

[You have harvested 3,000 sweet potatoes!]

And by the tenth hour...

[You have gained 1 DEX.]

[You have gained 1 DEX.]

[...DEX.]

[...DEX.]

[You have harvested 6,000 sweet potatoes!]

Hella was left completely speechless. ‘How is he not getting tired?’

In contrast, she felt so exhausted. It felt like she was going to fall asleep any second. However, Minhyuk still looked very energetic. On top of that, he had been working like that for twenty four hours straight.

[You have harvested more than 12,000 sweet potatoes.]

In the first place, Minhyuk was someone that did not give up easily. Seeing Minhyuk continue to dig sweet potatoes without resting for an entire day motivated Hella. She cheered herself up as she continued to push herself as well.

Then, by the third day, the sweet notifications rang out.

[You have harvested 20,000 sweet potatoes!]

[You have acquired the Sin’s Sweet Potato.]

[You can now harvest the Sin’s Potato!]

[You have acquired the God of Farming Hella's Shining Bean Sprouts.]

Even though almost half of the third day had passed by, what they had accomplished was still amazing.

Then, another notification rang in Minhyuk's ears.

[You have reached MAX favor with the God of Farming Hella.]

Minhyuk had constantly heard notifications regarding Hella's favor while he was harvesting sweet potatoes. So, it was not really that surprising.

Still full of vigor, Minhyuk asked Hella to sit down and take a break. They had conversed while harvesting the sweet potatoes. According to Hella, she had been struggling for thousands of years to harvest the Sin's Ingredients, in hopes that she would be able to provide the beings of Hell with incredible ingredients and allow them to eat tasty dishes.

Minhyuk smiled. Then, he peeled a roasted sweet potato and handed it over to the goddess. "Hella, you haven't eaten anything for a very long time. Go on, have a bite."

Hella looked at the sweet potato in Minhyuk's hands. Everyone had laughed at her when she said that she would let Hell thrive. However, she had continued on this seemingly unfeasible journey and it seemed like she was now finally heading toward the end. This young man in front of her was the only one that recognized her efforts.

She held the sweet potato in her hand before taking a bite. The taste of the root crop that she had not tasted for thousands of years was strangely sweet. Tears started to gather in her eyes.

"Thanks."

'Thank you, for giving me this delicious food for the first time in thousands of years.'

"Let me give you a present in return."

[You have received the blessings of the God of Farming Hella.]

[You have gained 1,000 DEX.]

[You have acquired the Active Skill: Farmer's Breath.]

'Oh?'

Minhyuk was in awe. He checked the information of the Farmer's Breath.

'Isn't this amazing?'

The Farmer's Breath was an amazing skill that could increase all of the crops effects by 10% just by breathing upon them.

After taking a short breath, the two stood up to begin harvesting the Sin's Potato. But then, Hella asked, "Why aren't you getting tired? Actually, why does it seem like you're enjoying this?"

There was no one in the world that would enjoy such repetitive and laborious work. Even the God of Farming was suffering from doing hard labor like this.

Minhyuk grinned and said, “Because I want to do it. I find enjoyment in things that I want to do. Besides, I also love eating sweet potatoes. More importantly, isn’t it fun to think that I will be able to help Hell thrive with you, Miss Hella?”

They were good words, and they moved Hella’s heart deeply. Although she was a god that stood at a high place, she was still able to learn something from the young man in front of her.

‘Have fun... that’s right. Let’s have fun.’

Minhyuk placed his hand on top of Sin's Potato.

[You have started the harvest of the Third Sin’s Ingredient, the Sin’s Potato.]

[To harvest the Sin’s Potato, you need to harvest a total of 40,000 sweet potatoes in five days.]

In a place where the corpses of the dead were strewn about, the God of Death sat on his throne with his eyes closed. He was the God that presided over all of those that died. A single drop of tear trickled down his cheek. The God of Death’s heart ached just at the thought of her.

Just like Athenae, the God of Death had sat in his position for a very long time. However, he had once doubted himself. It was because of that doubt that he chose to descend upon the earth.

It was during that time that he met the Continental God, the God of Farming Hella. Unlike himself, she was a being that had the power that could bring life to the world. Somehow, the grim, dark and twisted God of Death fell in love with the life-giving Hella.

It was true love, but one that should never have sprouted. The God of Death was hated by many. The day the God of Death returned to hell was the day his beloved Hella, the Continental God, was killed by the other gods.

The God that presided over Hell almost drowned in guilt. Hella would not have died and come to Hell if she had not loved him. On the day that he was supposed to send her off to be reincarnated, the God of Death could not face her because of that guilt. After all, even the God of Death could not revive the dead. Back then, Hella had said something.

—Do not feel sorry. I have no regrets loving you.

However, the God of Death could not raise his head to meet her gaze. Hella knew that the God of Death was overcome with guilt. She knew right then, the God of Death could not bring himself to see her anymore.

‘Are you thinking about those things again? You’re probably thinking along the lines of... I am hated by everyone because I am the God of Death. I cannot be happy because I am the God of Death?’

‘...’

‘And... All of this is because of me.’

‘...’

‘Weak. That’s what you are.’

Hella called the God of Death weak. When he looked up, he saw the bitter smile on Hella's face.

'I've found something to do. I'll make crops grow and make Hell thrive and become bountiful. I will only reincarnate after I have done that.'

'That's impossible. If you miss the time to reincarnate, your soul will not be able to enter the cycle of reincarnation and you will truly perish.'

'...Louis,' Hella called out to him in a small voice after hearing the worry in his tone.

The God of Death finally looked her in the eye.

'Didn't you say that before? I'm so tired of Hell where not a single grass could grow. I hate how Hell smells rotten. I hate myself for being the God of Death.'

'...'

'This is the place where you belong.'

Hella's smile was the most beautiful smile in the world.

'I will bring new life to your world before leaving.'

After that, Hella went to harvest the Sin's Ingredients. Thousands of years had passed since then. However, the God of Death never visited her. He could not face her. He knew that he was acting cowardly, running away from her just because he felt guilty.

But the God of Death also knew that Hella's true death was fast approaching. In fact, she should have perished more than 2,000 years ago. However, the God of Death had interfered and stopped her from truly dying. Now, she only had around a week left.

The God of Death had been watching her from far away, hiding his existence from her for a very long time. A thousand years since her declaration, exhaustion had already started to seep into her bones. Three thousand years later, she looked like she was having a hard time. However, she never ran away.

It had been a long time since the God of Death had last seen her smile. He just hoped that she would give up and finally enter the cycle of reincarnation.

The God of Death wiped the tears that dripped down his cheeks and slowly opened his eyes. Then, he gently placed his hand on the black crystal by his side to take a look at her face.

What greeted him though, was her bright and smiling face as she swung her hoe down. It was a smile that he had not seen on her face for thousands of years.

With hoe in hand, Hella was shouting with joy.

[It's a potato! Ahoo! Ahoo!]

"...Aho?"

What did aho mean? The God of Death tilted his head in confusion. That was when he found a young man not too far away from Hella.

[We will eat potatoes! Ahoo!!!]

[Aho! Aho!]

The God of Death watched the two people as they laughed and worked hard in the field together, his gaze drifting toward the man named Minhyuk.

'I hope that you can help her enter the cycle of reincarnation before it's too late.'

Chapter 817

"We will eat potatoes! Aho!!!"

Potatoes were delicious. Whether they were sliced thinly, or turned into French fries, or even if they were ground finely and turned into potato pancakes, they were still delicious. In fact, they were already appetizing even if they were just steamed and dipped in salt.

Minhyuk happily dug the potatoes, not a sign of exhaustion on his face.

"Aho! Aho!" Hella shouted, following behind Minhyuk and working happily on the field.

However, at that moment, Hella crouched when she felt something strange in her body. Of course, Minhyuk did not miss this scene.

"Urk!"

He could see the blood on the palm that she used to cover her mouth.

"Are you alright?"

"Ah. It's nothing. I probably just consumed too much mana."

Hella made it sound like it was nothing, but Minhyuk could tell that there was something off. After all, he could see how her body suddenly turned translucent before returning back to how it was.

"Shall we go back to working on the field again?"

Hella tried passing it off as nothing. However, Minhyuk could clearly tell that there was something truly wrong with her.

At that moment, a quest window suddenly appeared in front of Minhyuk.

[Sudden Quest: Harvesting Ingredients Before Hella's Soul Perish.]

Rank: SSS

Requirements: The One Chosen by the God of Death.

Rewards: The second seal of the Sword of Aeon will be lifted.

Penalty for Failure: Expulsion from Hell

Description: The God of Death is watching over you and Hella as you both try to harvest the Sin's Ingredients. However, Hella's soul will be destroyed in a few days' time. Harvest all of the Sin's Ingredients before that and help her enter the cycle of reincarnation safely.

"...!"

The God of Death was watching them. However, after reading the quest window, a frown appeared on Minhyuk's face.

'Perish?'

Hella had been in Hell for thousands of years. She had been here for far too long, it was hard to tell the exact length of time that she had been here.

'She is giving up her chance to enter the cycle of reincarnation just so she can help Hell thrive and prosper.'

Minhyuk was in awe and admiration of Hella's firm determination. Furthermore, the God of Death offered to lift the second seal of the Sword of Aeon as a reward.

Because of that, Minhyuk swung his hoe with greater vigor.

Thud, thud, thud—

'I don't know what's happening between the two of them, but...'

Minhyuk was already motivated enough with the God-grade ingredients that Hella would give her with every successful harvest of the Sin's Ingredients. Now, the lifting of the second seal of the Sword of Aeon was also added as a reward. However, the reason why Minhyuk's swinging grew stronger and faster was more than that.

'That determination and desire to change Hell even at the expense of your own well-being...'

Minhyuk's swings grew faster as he looked at Hella, who started to swing her hoe again after vomiting another mouthful of blood.

'I'll let you reincarnate safely.'

Thud—!

In the passageway between the continent and Edea.

At first, there were nearly a hundred million players that entered the passageway.

[Episode Quest: Cross the Passageway and Enter Edea.]

Rank: ???

Requirements: Level 400 or higher.

Rewards: +4 in all stats.

Penalty for Failure: Banned from entering the passageway.

Description: The Jade Emperor is calling for all of the heroes from the continent to fight on his behalf. Cross the passageway and reach Edea.

The reason why a huge number of players entered the passageway was because of the unconventional rewards.

On average, ordinary players would have around seven stats while high rankers would have around nine stats or more. These stats were STR, STM, AGI, INT, WIS, DEX, CHA, Observation, Will, Courage, and many more. Just by passing through the passageway, they could stand to have all of these stats increase by four. This would have the same effect as having their levels increase by three.

On top of the +4 in all stats once they successfully crossed through the passageway, their EXP acquisition rate and artifact drop rate would increase by 1.5x while fighting inside. Due to all these, nearly a hundred million players had gathered together to cross the passageway.

However, by the end of the passageway, the number of players left was only twelve million. Aside from the high ranking players, the rest of the players could not endure the high level of difficulty of the passageway and had all been forced to logout.

The players that stood at the vanguard looked tired and exhausted.

“Damn it. I didn’t expect us to take three weeks.”

Initially, they had thought that they would only take two weeks to break through the passageway. However, they took an additional six days before they could completely cross and reach Edea. They had been forced to wander around the Maze of Death that was located at the end of the passageway.

Most of the ones that were able to cross through the passageway were around Level 450 or higher. In other words, only the elite were able to survive. Thus, the hundred million players that first entered the passageway dwindled to a mere fraction that reached the exit that would lead to Edea.

[The exit is already in front of the players.]

[They only need to go a little further and they will be able to reach Edea.]

[From what we heard, the average level of Edea’s troops is known to be around Level 450. And from what we gathered, there are around four million troops that are waiting for them outside this passageway.]

[The leader of the Allied Forces, the Great Sage, Heaven’s Equal, is a high-leveled Named NPC, at Level 600.]

[The passageway to Edea is long and difficult. However, the rewards that the players are expecting are indeed sweet.]

[According to the agreement made by the Jade Emperor and the Battle God, the players are free to choose which side they want to stand on, whether it is the Allied Forces or the Jade Emperor’s side.]

[However, the rewards that the Jade Emperor are offering are much sweeter. Besides, all of the experts believe that the players sent by the Jade Emperor have a 95% chance of obtaining victory.]

[Since this is a large-scale episode, Joy Co. Ltd. has released the average level of Edea’s Allied Forces and even the level of the Great Sage, Heaven’s Equal and the other kings. Although Food God Minhyuk is standing with Edea, many of the players are still predicting the defeat of the Allied Forces.]

[The biggest reason why the players are deciding to turn their backs on Edea’s Allied Forces lies with the Jade Emperor’s envoys. The envoys are literally gods, not production-related gods, but combat-related gods.]

[According to the agreement, the envoys are not allowed to enter the battlefield as they please, instead, at certain intervals. With the addition of the players, it is expected to give a great boost to them.]

[Of course, the players that crossed through the passageway can still choose which side they want to join. They can also join Edea's allied forces. After all, there are no sides during the quest 'Cross the Passageway and Enter Edea.']

"How many artifacts and gold will I be able to earn in Edea?" Bastien, the man standing in the vanguard, also known as the number one in the global Summoner's Rankings, said.

Bastien and the other high rankers knew that the battle in Edea was not just about the fall of the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal. It was also about the spoils and EXP that they would get for killing their enemies and the rewards that they could obtain by plundering the four kingdoms. That thought alone was enough to cause them to shake in excitement.

In a battle where their victory was expected, Bastien, along with the rest of the players, arrived at the most dangerous part of the passage, the exit.

[You have completed the Episode Quest: Cross the Passageway and Enter Edea.]

[You have gained +4 in all of your stats.]

Bastien smiled in contentment after struggling to cross the aisle. However, the smile of delight that flashed on his face turned stiff the moment he breathed in the sweet air of Edea. He quickly turned to look at the players that followed right behind him from the cave-like passageway.

"Everyone, prepare to fight..."

Unfortunately, Bastien was not given the chance to finish his words.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang—

Tens of thousands of magic attacks rained down and exploded on the players that had successfully passed through the passageway.

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh—

Hundreds of thousands of arrows shot through the sky and pierced the hearts of the players. Bastien, who was standing at the vanguard, hurriedly summoned his Turtle Dragon. He hid behind its gigantic turtle back to look at the situation ahead.

What was waiting in front of them was none other than Edea's Allied Forces. They had already taken control of the area in front of the exit of the passageway and had been waiting for their arrival. However, the presence of the allies was not what surprised Bastien.

"What— what the hell is this..." Bastien looked at the huge shadow cast upon them as he muttered, "Turtle— turtle ship...?"

Bastien had seen the way the Beyond the Heavens, which had been called the Legend Guild back then, carried their defensive battle to success with the help of this fortress in the form of a turtle ship. The turtle ship-shaped fortress looked extremely durable and sturdy, especially since it was

made with reinforced steel. On top of that, they could freely launch sorties by opening and closing the upper portion of the turtle ship.

The turtle ship that appeared in front of them was a bit different from the one from before. The fortress now had wheels at the bottom, which allowed these turtle ships to move as they pleased. In addition, they had several holes in their front portion that allowed them to send countless spears, arrows and magic at their enemies.

This slightly different turtle ship was still not the reason why Bastien was shocked. Soon, the commentators saw the current situation that the players were currently facing as their drones entered Edea and flew above the players and the Allied Forces.

[There— there are dozens of turtle ships!]

[There are dozens of turtle ships waiting for the Jade Emperor's Army!]

[The shocking part is not the appearance of the turtle ship, but the sheer size and number of the turtle ships present in the area.]

[The Edea episode started around three weeks ago. During that amount of time, they should have only been able to build one or two turtle ships. However, there were more than thirty turtle ships that appeared in front of everyone!]

Cold sweat started to drip down Bastien's back.

The entire Edea Allied Forces were riding aboard those dozens of turtle ships. Sun Wukong, who was standing on the turtle ship at the center of their formation, shouted, "Fire!!!"

Several openings appeared on the surface of the thirty turtle ships. At the same time, the Dragon Cannons that Trap Installer Bichor had created appeared, and shot blazing flames that could melt anything and everything that crossed its path.

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaaa—

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaaa—

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaaa—

Dozens of streams of fire shot forth and melted the players that stepped out of the passageway. That was not all, the Edean troops also began to shoot arrows that pierced through the bodies of the players that survived the initial catastrophe.

A faint smile appeared on the face of the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal, Sun Wukong.

'We were only able to make one turtle ship.'

That was right. They were only able to create one turtle ship with the blueprint that Minhyuk had brought them in the span of two weeks that they were given to prepare for this battle. So, why were there thirty turtle ships that appeared in this place? The secret laid with The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal's Cloning Technique.

The Great Sage, Heaven's Equal's Cloning Technique could replicate and clone various forms, including objects. However, there was a problem with this. The more the object was replicated, the lower the attack and defense the replicated object would have. Thankfully, Mihyuk's dish was able to make up for this shortcoming.

Originally, if the original body of the object could release 100% power, then the replicated body would only be able to release 30% of the original's power. But thanks to Minhyuk's dish, the replicated turtle ships could exert around 50% of the original's power.

Moreover, most of the weapons that they loaded on the turtle ships were not replicated. Basically, they just used the replicated turtle ships as a way to equip and use these weapons.

[This is surprising.]

[In just an instant, more than 200,000 players have disappeared without leaving a single trace.]

The cameras that floated above caught the flustered look on the players' faces. However, the high rankers immediately came back to their senses and issued orders.

“Charge!!!”

“Do not forget that our numbers far surpass theirs!!!”

The players that were able to successfully pass through the passageway that connected Edea were all elites. All of them had decent skills and control, and were armed with better artifacts.

The rest of the players immediately followed the high rankers' orders and charged forward despite the continuous downpour of arrows and magical attacks. The tens of thousands of mages cast Shield to create a barrier in front of them, while the tankers raised their square shields and created a wall that protected the others.

‘Considering the level of the troops of Edea, we will be able to pierce through their defenses!!!’

The level of the troops of Edea's Allied Forces were at the same level as the minimum level of the players that charged through the passageway. Since that was the case, their side, with higher numbers than their enemies, would have a bigger advantage.

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh—

“Huh...?”

Bastien felt that something was off. The arrows sent by the soldiers of Edea only pierced through the players' vital points, like their necks or their hearts.

‘What?’

Then, at that moment, hundreds of thousands of Edea's Allied Forces' soldiers charged forward as the lower portion of the turtle ships opened.

“Uwaaaaaaaaah!!!”

“Uwaaaaaaaaah!!!”

“Uwaaaaaaaaah!!!”

The charging soldiers of Edea's Allied Forces collided with the players that ran toward the turtle ships.

Slaaaaaash—

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

Swooooooosh—

“...What the hell?”

“They aren’t at Level 450!!!”

“The level of the soldiers is much higher than what we expected!!!”

The spears and swords of the troops of Edea’s Allied Forces were much faster than the players’ own. That was when Bastien turned to look at the level of the soldiers in front of him.

[Edea’s Soldier. Level 451.]

“...?”

That was strange. Joy Co. Ltd. clearly published the average level of the soldiers of Edea’s Allied Forces. Yet, these soldiers were easily cutting down the players in front of them, leaving them in a disastrous situation.

“...This— this crazy bastard...”

Only then did Bastien and the commentators realize the situation in front of them.

[Pl— Player Minhyuk must have fed the soldiers of Edea with his dishes!]

[However, what is scarier is the fact that the soldiers did not just grow 10% or 15% stronger.]

[From what it looks like, they have grown at least 20% stronger!]

A huge variable had suddenly appeared, which allowed the soldiers of Edea to sweep the players.

As mentioned many times before, NPCs were better than the players at the same level as them. After all, they had been trained in the way of their weapons since they were young, with most of them training from the moment they woke up, until the moment they slept. On the other hand, the players had only touched swords or other weapons inside the game. This was the clear difference between players and NPCs.

However, a grin still spread on Bastien’s face. “It doesn’t matter.”

Some players would possess something that put them at an advantage over NPCs. That was none other than their artifacts and skills.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

“Use your skills!!! We can push those soldiers back if we shower them with our skills!!!”

Bastien’s grin grew wider. Their opponents might believe that they had prepared enough. However, if it was just to this extent, then they would never be able to overcome the players.

Unbeknownst to them, this was not the only thing that Minhyuk had prepared. He did everything he could, employing all means and methods.

Notifications suddenly rang in the ears of all of the players that successfully entered Edea.

[The Food God is proposing a quest to the players!]

Kings could give quests to players that belonged to their kingdom, while gods could suggest quests to any player. The notification window popped up in front of them.

[Quest: Hunting the Jade Emperor's Coalition Army.]

Rank: ???

Requirements: Players that have passed through the passageway and entered Edea.

Rewards: Fairy's Tears (1)

Penalty for Failure: Gaining the hostility of the Jade Emperor's Envoys.

Description: You will gain one Fairy's Tear for every soldier of the Jade Emperor's Coalition Army that you kill. However, you will only be able to receive the Fairy's Tears if you can successfully reach Edea's Allied Forces' fortress.

"...!"

"...!"

"...!"

Silence enveloped the battlefield for a very short moment. Even though the magical attacks and arrows were raining upon them, the players all stopped moving.

However, the one that was extremely alarmed by this sudden turn of events was none other than Bastien. In fact, he could barely breathe from the shock.

"This— Thiiiiiiiis— This— cr— crazy bastard..."

The commentators kindly spoke for him.

[This— this is crazy!!!]

[You will be able to get one Fairy's Tears if you hunt one player?! Just so you know, you will be able to get twenty platinum if you sell this Fairy's Tear on the market. In other words, it's worth around a hundred million won in cash!]

[To think you can get one for every player that you successfully hunt!]

That was right. Minhyuk was using every means and methods available to him. This was the second part of his preparations.

Chapter 818

For high rankers, twenty platinum was not much. That amount of money was something that they could earn by working hard in a day or two. However, how many of the players were high rankers?

High ranking players only accounted for 5% of the tens of millions of high-levelled players of Athenae. Hence, twenty platinum was important to the majority of these players.

The difference in level between the high rankers and the ordinary high-levelled players was quite huge. High rankers could solo a boss mob, while ordinary high-levelled players would need to team up with at least five or six other players.

Because of that, most of them would only be able to earn around one or two platinum per day. But now, these ordinary players were given the opportunity to earn platinum that was worth a hundred million in cash, just by killing anyone siding with the Jade Emperor.

Everyone had many points of interest when they saw the notifications. First, they were shocked that Minhyuk had the financial power to pull this off. Second, they were very surprised to know that they would also have the chance to gain hundreds of millions in cash.

Everything was at a standstill despite the non-stop bombings of magical attacks sent by Edea's Allied Forces. Even the arrows fell continuously, piercing through the bodies of the players that stood there in a daze. However, there was a strange sense of tension that buzzed in the air amidst the battlefield.

Then, at that moment, a person's voice rang out.

"Hey. Let's split the money fifty-fifty. I'll give you fifty million won."

Staaaaaab—

One of the players stabbed the heart of his friend that logged in the game together with him.

"Hey. Don't you think that's a bit too much... you f*cker."

An ugly expression flashed on the face of the player that got stabbed in the heart.

"It's just a game anyway."

That spark gave way to a rapidly devolving situation.

"Haren, I'm sorry."

Staaaaaab—

"Keuaaaaaaaack! You m*therf*cker.."

Slaaaaaaash!

"Aaaaaaaack!"

"Keuaaaaaack!"

The screams of players being killed by their own comrades rang loudly in the battlefield. The commotion grew gradually like the cracks created by an earthquake, as greedy players killed their own allies one after another.

The wavering players were thinking, 'It should be fine, right?' This was particularly the case for the mages. They were considered the most threatening existence during this moment. After all, they were capable of casting AOE magic attacks from afar. These kinds of skills would be most effective since the coalition army were all gathered together.

The close combat players were at the vanguard while the archers and the mages were at the rear. In other words, the mages were gathered together. All of them used their AOE magic at the same time, as if they had been waiting for this moment.

"Explosion!"

“Fire Storm!”

“Fire Wall!”

“Wind Cutter!”

Their targets were the archers that had significantly lower HP and defenses compared to the close combat players.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

“Keuaaaaaaack!”

“Aaaack! This damn bastard mages!!!”

“Keuaaaaaaack!”

The archers began to shoot their arrows to retaliate against the mages’ offensive.

“Yes! I killed three people!”

“I got two!!!”

However, the mages, who could cast AOE magic attacks, were at a more advantageous position.

This indiscriminate bombings and attacks between the mages and the archers was enough to make the players who were sitting over the fence, come to a decision.

“This f*cking bastard! Want to try me, huh?!!”

“Shut up, f*cker!”

“You morons! Are you going to kill your comrades just for a hundred million won?!”

“Yeah! I can kill for a hundred million won!”

The thing that could make people do the scariest things in the world was money.

[A terrible catastrophe is unfolding right in front of our very eyes.]

[The ones that have gathered to deal with Edea’s Allied Forces have been taken advantage of and are now killing each other.]

[In the first place, the Jade Emperor’s Coalition Army is a group of people that have gathered only for the benefits. For people like them, the Fairy Tears have a very sweet allure.]

[This is definitely Player Minhyuk’s idea. It’s amazing. Some might say that Player Minhyuk’s method is a common chaebol behavior where they show off their money. But if we look at the reality, we can’t say that it’s something that he should not do.]

[Player Minhyuk is in a very unfavorable situation after all. He has to protect the entire Edea by himself.]

[Because of the situation, the viewers will most likely say that he’s a truly amazing person instead of criticizing Player Minhyuk.]

[As we speak, the turtle ships have once again fired their dragon cannons.]

[Edea's Allied Forces are also helping with their magic attacks and arrows.]

[The Jade Emperor's Coalition Army is decreasing in numbers at a truly fast pace.]

The notifications also rang at the same time.

[Edea's Allied Forces have defeated 450,000 of the Jade Emperor Coalition Army!]

[According to the agreement made between the Battle God and the Jade Emperor, special privileges and benefits will be given to Player Minhyuk, the commander of Edea's Allied Forces.]

The Jade Emperor's Coalition Army was in a much superior position. Because of that, the Jade Emperor's Coalition Army would not receive any benefits. On the other hand, those that would stand on Edea's side would receive all the benefits. Alas, none of those that sided with the Jade Emperor knew about the rewards that the Allied Forces would receive.

"You bastards! Aren't you going to stop?!!"

"Enough!!!"

The top rankers that had sat on the throne as kings during the Battle of Thrones, tried to stop the other players but none of their words worked.

Human greed was truly a scary thing. It could sometimes make others betray their lovers, friends, and even their family. Since this happened in the game, people would easily reveal their greed.

Bastien, who watched everything unfold in front of him, bit his lips tightly. 'He's willing to spend hundreds of billions of won for this?'

The Food God was a great man. However, no matter how great or amazing he was, would Minhyuk truly be willing to spend hundreds of billions of won? No, perhaps he had spent far more than that. Even if Minhyuk won this battle, his worth would not be worth hundreds of billions of won.

Then, Bastien's eyes grew wide in realization, "This— This is a trap...!"

"What?" Xu Jiaqi looked at him in confusion when she heard those words.

"Minhyuk has no intention of spending a single penny!!!"

"What the hell are you talking about?"

Xu Jiaqi, the king of Qingdao Kingdom, was confused. Minhyuk had obviously used his position as a god to send a large-scale quest to the players. Even if he was a god, he would receive sanctions if he could not fulfill the rewards that he had listed in the quest. But Bastien was saying that Minhyuk did not have any intention of spending a single penny.

"Take a good look at the quest window, Xu Jiaqi. What do you think is wrong with it?"

In fact, if one looked closely, they would realize that it was impossible to complete this quest. Xu Jiaqi's eyes grew wide after she carefully perused the contents of the quest.

"This is crazy..."

They felt terrified, yet at the same time, in awe of Minhyuk's brilliant idea. Bastien looked at the battlefield once again.

Before crossing the passageway, the players had to choose whether they would stand on the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal's side or the Jade Emperor's side. If they were not here, then they were not on the Jade Emperor's side.

However, what if they attacked their own allies? What would happen next was simple.

[You have decided to help Edea's Allied Forces!]

Those who had not moved to kill any of Edea's Allied Forces were automatically recognized as the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal's allies. That was why their nicknames, which were initially written in blue, had turned to red by themselves. In other words, they had turned into enemies.

What would happen if someone with a red name appeared amidst the ranks of the Jade Emperor's Coalition Army? If one looked closely at the contents of the quest, they would see something like this:

[If you can successfully reach Edea's Allied Forces' fortress.]

However, it was impossible for them to reach that fortress. The rest of the Coalition Army would kill those that betrayed their allies.

Bastien tore a Megaphone Parchment and shouted, "Everyone! Stop!!!"

The deep and loud voice rang heavily, shaking everyone's eardrums. Some of the players stopped, while others kept on killing their allies. However, after Bastien had explained the current situation, an awkward air began to wrap around the players.

"Damn it..."

"Shit, we're f*cked..."

As mentioned before, the names of the players' characters, who had killed their allies, had already turned red. However, they were still amidst the Jade Emperor's Coalition Army.

These people, who had been blinded by greed and failed to see the reality of the matter, could not stop the ugly expression that flashed on their faces.

"C— can't you just spare us?"

"Spare us and allow us to reach Edea's Allied Forces, please!!!"

There were around 500,000 players with red names amidst their troops. These players no longer wished to attack the people around them. All they wanted was to receive the corresponding Fairy Tears for those that they have killed before.

However, Bastien and the other top rankers that participated in the Battle of Thrones looked at each other. Each and every single one of them shook their heads.

Then, Bastien said, "Kill all of the players that have become a part of Edea's Allied Forces."

With his orders, the Jade Emperor's Coalition Army sent concentrated attacks to the places where these players had gathered.

There were many reasons why they had to kill these 500,000 players on their own. The first reason was they had betrayed their allies. Second, if they decided to spare them and take them along, they

would not know when these players would turn around and hit the back of their heads. As for the third reason, there was no real need to carry them after all.

“Aaaaaaaaack!!!”

“P-please spare me!!!”

“I can get 300 million, it’s within my reach. Please just spare me this once. Just let me stay, please. Keuaaaaaack!!!”

The players’ desperate screams rang loudly in the battlefield. However, the expressions on the faces of the Jade Emperor’s Coalition Army were complicated as they meted out the punishment on those that betrayed their allies.

[The Jade Emperor’s Coalition Army’s morale has dramatically decreased.]

[All of your stats will decrease by 5%.]

“Retreat! Everyone, retreat!!!” The Great Sage, Heaven’s Equal Sun Wukong gave his orders.

At the same time, the Allied Forces’ turtle ships began to back away from the Jade Emperor’s Coalition Army, even though the Coalition Army had taken a huge blow to their morale.

Kentaro, the Japanese Server’s top ranker, smiled while thinking about how great and amazing Minhyuk truly was. Meanwhile, Bastien and Xu Jiaqi assessed the situation with ugly faces.

Among these rankers, there was one high ranker that watched Edea’s Allied Forces back away and retreat. The ranker was wearing a robe with a hood that covered most of his face and a mask. If others saw him, they would immediately think that he was an assassin.

‘I...’

This ranker was none other than Alexander, who became the first Eight Pillars’ Class, the Weapon Master not too long ago.

‘...will lead Edea’s Allied Forces to victory.’

[You have harvested 50,000 potatoes!]

[You have acquired Sin’s Potato.]

[You have acquired God of Farming Hella’s Noble and Lofty Zucchini.]

Minhyuk safely completed the harvest of the third Sin’s Ingredient. While he was in the middle of his harvest frenzy, he received notifications about how they had defeated 1.2 million troops of the Coalition Army and how he had gained special privileges and rewards for achieving such a feat.

However, these notifications did not lighten the burden that he had to carry. In fact, it even put more pressure on him to return as fast as possible.

“Urk! Cough!”

After finishing the harvest of the third Sin's Ingredient, Hella collapsed on the ground and coughed up several mouthfuls of blood. Her blood soaked the ground as her body turned translucent for a moment before returning back to her original appearance.

[Hella's soul is nearing its demise!]

[Hurry up! Harvest the final Sin's Ingredient and allow Hella to reincarnate safely!]

Minhyuk knew that there was no time for him to rest, especially after hearing the notifications.

"Now... you know that I wouldn't believe that all of this is just because you're tired, right?"

"..." Hella smiled bitterly as she struggled to get up. "Soon, my soul might be gone forever. That's why..."

Hella held the hoe in her hand tightly.

"...for Hell to thrive and bloom."

'And for the dark and brooding you.'

"Let's go and harvest the fourth and final ingredient."

Minhyuk hurriedly approached the last Sin's Ingredient and stretched his hand out. The final Sin's Ingredient was cabbage.

[You have started the harvest of the Fourth Sin's Ingredient, the Sin's Cabbage.]

[You need to harvest the Sin's Cabbage in three days.]

Crackleeeeeeee—

Blazing flames that seemed like they could burn anything and everything in their path burst out of the cabbage. It seemed like one had to endure the blazing flames to successfully harvest the cabbage. Minhyuk and Hella walked toward the cluster of blazing flames together.

Meanwhile, Minhyuk thought, 'The Jade Emperor's Coalition Army will face Hanwoo for the second round.'

Jade Emperor's Coalition Army.

The high rankers were discussing their next steps.

"That guy will probably send Hanwoo out next," Xu Jiaqi said.

Hanwoo was a being that could grow several tens of meters in height and was someone that boasted a powerful attack. He was a very terrifying being that had trampled tens of thousands of enemies in the countless battles that he had participated in with his Hanwoo Charge.

However, the Jade Emperor's Coalition Army was fully prepared to face him. Once Hanwoo used his Charge skill, the global number one tanker, Valentino, would summon his Shield Wall along with the other tankers.

Valentino's Shield Wall could only be activated after taking the MP of the other tankers around him. However, Valentino's Shield Wall was the best shield. In fact, it could stop anyone's charge and they were confident it could even block Hanwoo.

At that moment, terrifying sounds rang out.

Thud, thud, thud, thud, thud—

The thundering footsteps made the entire Jade Emperor's Coalition Army nervous.

“Valentinoooooo!!!”

“I know!!!”

Valentino, one of the kings in the Battle of the Thrones and the global number one tanker, stepped forward with tens of thousands of rankers at the cry of the other high rankers.

[To activate Shield's Wall, you need to use the MP of other tankers.]

[Player Ronsi has given his power to your shield.]

[Player Kenya...to your shield.]

[Player Ero...to your shield.]

Tens of thousands of rankers channeled their MP to power Valentino's Shield Wall. Then, a flash of bright and blinding light appeared as Valentino slammed his square shield into the ground.

Crack—

At the same time, a transparent shield appeared as his shield grew several tens of meters in height. This Shield Wall would definitely be able to neutralize Hanwoo's Charge.

At that moment, Sun Wukong suddenly appeared in the skies above them on his Flying Nimbus. Then, he threw a bottle filled with white sloshing liquid in the air.

Pop—

Piiiiing—

The bottle burst, creating what seemed like a flash bang that instantly made everyone's vision turn white, while a piercing sound rang in their ears. Even Valentino's vision had turned white.

However, Valentino grinned. Why? Because he has a skill called God's Aggro, a skill that could drag the target toward his shield without fail. Before the flash bang burst out, he had seen Hanwoo growing and charging at them from a distance. So, he triggered God's Aggro.

[God's Aggro.]

[Please choose your target!]

“Hanwoo.”

[Your chosen target will collide with your Shield's Wall!]

The enemy was trying to blind them for a moment and bring chaos and confusion? Bullshit. That was nothing.

Beeeeeeep—

At that moment, their vision and hearing started to return. The grinning Valentino could not help but breathe out in disbelief after looking beyond his powerful and transparent shield.

“Keheoook!”

A commotion broke out among the players.

“Wh— What the hell?!”

“This is crazy!!!”

“I— I never expected something like this!!!”

The scene that greeted them when their vision returned was the terrifying charge of not one, but more than a hundred, fifty-meter-high Hanwoos.

“Mooooooooo!!!”

“Mooooooooooooooooo!!!”

“Mooooooooo!!!”

Chapter 819

Hanwoo's Charge was the greatest AOE attack skill of the Bull Demon King, former king of the Kingdom of Eden. It was a truly overpowered skill, with its 6,000% additional attack and ability to break everything and anything that crossed his path during the charge.

The players had always been in awe whenever they watched Hanwoo grow to the height of fifty meters, before charging forward to trample his enemies. This time, the Jade Emperor's Coalition Army had prepared the Shield's Wall and the God's Aggro to stop Hanwoo's Charge.

However, an unbelievable scene was unfolding in front of their very eyes. Hundreds of Hanwoos, each over fifty meters tall, were charging forward and encircling their entire army.

[You have triggered the Hundred Army's Cloning Technique.]

[The Hundred Army's Cloning Technique can increase the number of your chosen target, raise the terror in the hearts of your enemies to the extreme and greatly expand the range of the skill that is used by the target!]

[The skills used by the clones will only have 10% of the original power!]

The main reason why Sun Wukong could compete with the Jade Emperor was because of his cloning technique. Utilizing Sun Wukong's cloning technique, Hanwoo became a hundred Hanwoos.

Thud, thud, thud, thud, thud—

The entire Jade Emperor's Coalition Army fell into great chaos as the gigantic Hanwoos charged at them. At that moment, Master Archer Miao pulled the strings of her bow and released an arrow.

Swoooooosh—

Her arrow was aiming at Hanwoo's forehead.

“Reinforced Shot.”

Hanwoo, who received the Reinforced Shot with 3,500% additional attack, disappeared with a bang!

Master Archer Miao immediately explained, “Get back to your senses! The Hanwoos are just an illusion created by cloning techniques. His attack and defense will be much lower than usual. Even if you get trampled by his feet, you will be able to endure it. We can also make him disappear before he arrives!”

The high rankers saw through the shortcomings of the cloning technique in a single glance. If this was the usual Hanwoo, then they would not be able to kill him, even if they poured all of their attacks on him. However, the situation was different right now.

Poof—

Poof—

The mages hurriedly cast their magical attacks. As a result, several Hanwoos were swept away by the explosion of their attacks and disappeared into nothingness.

“It— It’s true?!”

“Right. They won’t inflict high damage on us even if we get trampled on,” Master Archer Miao declared confidently.

Of course, the others also felt the same.

Tak— tak, tak, tak—

However, just when Hanwoo jumped among the ranks of the Coalition Army, a mysterious sound, which seemed like the drumming of a muyu, rang across the battlefield. It was quite strange. Although the entire battlefield was covered with Hanwoo’s thundering footsteps, all of the players could still hear the drumming of a muyu clearly in their ears.

Taak— taaak—

Then, the sound of the muyu started to slow down.

[All of the members of the Allied Forces have been blessed by the Great Buddha’s power to defeat all of the enemies!]

[All stats will increase by 21%. Both physical and magical attack will increase by 23%!]

[This buff effect can overlap with other buffs.]

The power of the Great Buddha seeped into the charging Hanwoos’ bodies as the first Hanwoo made contact with the Jade Emperor’s Coalition Army.

“No matter how high your damage is...” Master Archer Miao cried loudly.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang—!

“Keuaaaaack!”

“Aaaaaaack!”

“U— uwaaaaaack!”

“It— it hurts!!!”

Unfortunately, things played out differently than expected. The players that had been trampled by Hanwoo’s gigantic feet were left confused and in a daze. The damage that they received was not negligible at all. Of course, there was not a single player that died under Hanwoo’s feet. However, their HP fell by around 10~20%, more than their expectations of 5% damage.

Why was that the case? This was because Hanwoo, or the Bull Demon King, had also eaten Minhyuk’s buffed dish. Minhyuk had made sure to feed him a buffed dish that maximized the effects of Hanwoo’s Charge skill.

Not long after, more than ninety Hanwoos charged forward and trampled upon the enemy army.

“Keuaaaaack!”

“Uwaaaaaaaack!”

“A— aaaaaaaaack!”

After four seconds of non-stop charging, no player had been forced to log out yet. However, after a certain period of time, the players began to get swept away. After all, Valentino’s Shield Wall, a skill that could only prevent one attack, was already useless.

[A herd of Hanwoos is trampling on the players. This is crazy!]

[The Jade Emperor’s Coalition Army is left in confusion and chaos from what Player Minhyuk and Edea’s Allied Forces have prepared!]

[However, it’s still lacking by quite a lot!]

[Hanwoo’s Charge is a power that can trample upon the enemies and kill them. It’s something that will not give the players any room to breathe!]

[However, please look at the situation right now! The players that have crossed through the passageway are those with great control and superb ability to read the flow of the battle. They are currently holding out with the help of the priests’ heals and potions!]

[If we’re looking at the extent of the damage, we can clearly say that the damage inflicted is much lesser than the normal damage that Hanwoo’s Charge can inflict!]

That was right. The hundred Hanwoos were definitely effective in causing chaos among the enemy ranks. However, the power had obviously decreased.

The tankers hurriedly triggered their skills as they pushed their square shields to cover the heads of the players around them. These square shields, which numbered at ten thousands perhaps even more, created an amazing scene that prevented Hanwoo’s feet from trampling on them.

“Ridiculous bastard. Did you think that this would work on us, huh? What a grand idea, huh?!” Summoner Bastien chuckled along with the other high rankers. Even the troops of the Jade Emperor’s Coalition Army were all relieved to know that the damage was at a level that they could endure.

However, there was one man that did not laugh. It was none other than Alexander, who was hiding underneath the hood of his robe.

‘Something’s strange.’

Once the Jade Emperor’s Coalition Army reached a certain area in Edea, they would join the Heavenly Army and become a much stronger army. So, before that, Minhyuk had to kill as many of the Coalition Army as possible. However, Hanwoo’s Charge was not doing much in terms of reducing the enemy numbers.

Alexander realized something, his eyes growing wide.

‘If it were me, I would have set up Bichor’s trap at the exit of the passageway.’

Looking back on their situation, the only thing that Alexander had seen that came from Bichor was the outstanding Dragon Cannons.

‘No way!!!’ A thought flashed in Alexander’s head, his eyes growing even wider with the realization.

[Edea’s Commander laughed as he looked at his enemies!]

[Edea’s Commander has opened his mouth to say...]

[Bang.]

It was short and bold. Of course, Edea’s Commander was given plenty of special privileges and rewards. The Commander’s Voice, which was quite similar to God’s Voice, was also one of those privileges.

“Bang?”

“...?”

While everyone was lost in confusion, Alexander discovered potion bottles that were tied with a rope on the legs of Hanwoo’s clones.

Baaaaaaaang—!

Then, one of the potion bottles exploded. Tens of thousands of players disappeared without a trace.

‘Crazy...’

Alexander’s gaze moved around until he confirmed the location of all of Hanwoo’s clones.

‘They’re all suddenly deep inside the Coalition Army...’

All of the Hanwoos had already penetrated deeply in the army. The deeper one was, the higher the number of troops gathered.

‘Minhyuk never intended to use Hanwoo’s Charge to kill the troops in the first place.’

The appearance of hundreds of Hanwoos was meant to serve as a tactic to create chaos and disturbance among the enemy troops. This was Minhyuk’s true plan.

“...We’re in trouble,” Valentino murmured, his face turning deathly white.

Like a chain reaction, the rest of the potions exploded one after the other.

Baaaaaaaaaang—

The huge explosions shook the entirety of Edea. The estimated number of bottles that exploded was around ten. However, each and every single one of those bottles could trigger an earth-shaking explosion.

[Edea's Allied Forces have defeated 1,100,000 of the Jade Emperor Coalition Army!]

[According to the agreement made between the Battle God and the Jade Emperor, special privileges and benefits will be given to Player Minhyuk, the commander of Edea's Allied Forces.]

Hell on earth. There was nothing else to describe the situation that suddenly unfolded in front of them, as players were forced to log out in droves from the huge explosions that bloomed amidst their ranks. Even though there were players that had miraculously escaped being forced to log out, they were left lying on the ground, groaning from the severe injuries that littered their bodies.

The Edea's Commander's Voice rang in the ears of these people.

[Edea's Commander is laughing and mocking the enemies!]

Crackleeeeeee—!

Blazing flames, which seemed to be able to burn everything and anything that it passed by, rose up from the Barren Land's dry and empty fields.

After mocking the Jade Emperor's Coalition Army and forcing 1.2 million of their troops to log out by making full use of Hanwoo and the explosives, Minhyuk concentrated on his task once again.

Crackleeeeeee—

“Ugh!”

“Kghhhhk...”

Both Hella and Minhyuk groaned after they jumped into the fire pit to harvest the cabbage.

[A small portion of Velma's flames flows out and prevents you from harvesting the cabbage!]

[Your HP has dropped below 80%.]

[Your HP has dropped below 79%.]

[Your HP...]

Notifications rang constantly in Minhyuk's ears as the flames licked every inch of his body. Of course, since he was a player, it just felt a bit weird to him. Unfortunately, that was not the case for Hella. Her entire body was being destroyed and burned by the flames. She endured the pain from the blazing flames and continued to work hard on harvesting the final ingredient. It was quite a spectacular sight to see the two of them slamming their hoes on the ground while being engulfed with flames.

The only reason why Minhyuk and Hella was able to endure this long was because the two of them had been sharing Mandala's Potion. However, the potion would run out soon.

Thud— Thud— Thud—

It was getting harder and harder for Hella to swing her hoe. There was respect in Minhyuk's eyes as he watched Hella work hard while enduring the burning pain that wracked her entire body.

'For thousands of years...'

She was a woman that dreamt of making Hell thrive and prosper.

'I'll let this barren land, the land where you belong, bloom and thrive.'

Along with that dream was her love for the God of Death.

[Harvest Rate: 47%!]

[Harvest Rate: 48%!]

[Harvest Rate...]

Thud, thud, thud—

They had been digging hard and swinging their hoes for who knew how long. However, the two of them continued to work hard, hoping that their efforts would bear fruit.

"Urk! Cough!"

"Hella, are you alri..."

"Don't stop!" Hella shouted when she saw Minhyuk try to stop to approach her. Even when the red and blazing flames were burning her entire body, Hella's complexion remained deathly white. However, she still gave a small smile while saying, "Please, I beg you. Please don't stop what you're doing."

Minhyuk could see how desperate she was. He tightened his grip on his hoe and nodded.

"How long are you going to avoid Hella when she's working hard like this?"

Minhyuk's voice was faint. In fact, the loud crackle of the flames easily buried his voice. However, this voice still floated to someone's ears.

"How long will you keep on saying that it's your fault while running away without even apologizing, you moron?" Minhyuk murmured, addressing the man despite not knowing if he was listening. Nevertheless, he continued to swing his hoe.

Crackleeee—!

"Hihihihihing!!!"

When they reached 50% of the harvest rate, a larger and hotter flame suddenly burst out from the dry and barren land.

[Velma has appeared!]

[Velma is the mother of all Hell Horses that exist in Hell!]

[She is the guardian that protects Hell together with the God of Death!]

[Warning!]

[Warning!]

[Hell Horse Velma is a ferocious being!]

[Hell Horse Velma. Level 627.]

“Hihihihihihihing!”

A Hell Horse covered with black flames appeared. Its flames burned brighter and hotter than those that covered ordinary Hell Horses. The Hell Horse looked at Minhyuk and Hella.

‘Nothing is ever easy in this world.’

Minhyuk bit his lips tightly.

The God of Death heard Minhyuk’s words loud and clear.

—How long are you going to avoid Hella when she’s working hard like this?

—How long will you keep on saying that it’s your fault while running away without even apologizing, you moron?

The most fearsome and ferocious god in the world, the God of Deaths, sat on his throne made of skeletons as he looked at his crystal ball. Minhyuk’s murmurs continued to be delivered to his ears.

—Hella is determined to make the world that you live in prosperous and more beautiful, even at the risk of her soul getting destroyed. Will you be okay if her soul gets destroyed like that, huh?

Those words made the God of Death jump from his seat. Everything that a god had, including his pride, arrogance, face and even his guilt, he finally put it down. Gods could also love, even if they were scary or deadly.

[Hihihihihihihing!]

The crystal ball showed the scene where Hell Horse Velma roared wildly. Velma was Hell’s guardian god. She might be a horse, but her strength and power was comparable to that of ordinary gods.

Perhaps Hella would die under Velma’s hooves. After all, Velma’s mission was to maintain the state of Hell. Harvesting all of the Sin’s Ingredients meant that they would be breaking the balance that Velma protected.

At that moment, a huge door opened in front of the God of Death, widely recognized as one of the greatest and most fearsome gods. However, he completely threw away his pride to run toward the woman that he loved.

Throb—

A memory flashed in the God of Death's mind. It was a memory of the time when he, Hella and Velma spent great times laughing together. Even so, Velma was someone that was very faithful to her mission.

The God of Death ran like crazy until he arrived near the Barren Land.

[The Food God has taken over your possession of the Mother of Hell Horses, Velma!]

"...?"

What greeted him was a ridiculous notification. The God of Death could not help but laugh helplessly. He came here just in case the Mother of Hell Horses Velma tried to kill Hella. But what he saw was Velma sitting in front of Hella, while removing the flames that covered the Barren Land.

Hella was gently stroking Velma's head as she called out, "Velma."

"..."

The words that followed made the God of Death's heart drop.

"Please take care of Louis when I'm no longer here."

Chapter 820

Hell's Guardian God Velma had existed since Hell and the God of Death existed. She was born to maintain the balance of Hell. Harvesting the Sin's Ingredients in the Barren Land was something that might break the balance in Hell.

"Hihihihihihihing!"

Velma's entire body was covered in black flames, while red flames covered the place where her mane should be.

'She's higher than Level 600...'

This came as a disappointment to Minnyuk, who was trying to harvest the final Sin's Ingredient, the Sin's Cabbage. Did this mean that he had to deal with Velma while harvesting the cabbage?

Given Velma's level, Minhyuk would probably only be able to deal with her if he could utilize all the cooking buff effects available to him and go all out. However, the problem was that they were in urgent need to harvest the Sin's Cabbage.

'Hella's soul might get destroyed.'

If Minhyuk was forced to fight Velma, then Hella would be left alone to harvest the Sin's Ingredient, which would be a huge problem. If that happened, then Minhyuk was sure that the aftermath of the battle between him and Velma would definitely affect Hella.

Minhyuk put his hoe back into his inventory and grabbed his sword. He looked nervously at Velma, who was standing arrogantly a few meters away from them. But then, something strange happened.

"..."

Velma could not take her eyes off of Hella. Under normal circumstances, Velma would have already displayed her ferocious nature by charging at intruders and biting them. However, Velma just stood there and looked at Hella.

Then, tears started to well up in Velma's eyes.

"Hihihihing..." Velma cried softly.

Seeing this, Hella stopped harvesting for a moment. She looked at Velma with a bitter smile on her face and said, "Have you been well, Velma?"

"...Ah."

Minhyuk finally understood the situation. Velma was owned by the God of Death. If Hella was the God of Death's lover, then she must have spent quite a lot of time with Velma.

The flames that covered the Barren Land almost disappeared.

[Velma is the god tasked to protect the balance in Hell!]

Crackleeeee—!

The flames that were on the verge of dying down burst out once again. This was a restriction placed upon the guardian god. Even if Velma did not want to, she would be forced to protect the balance in Hell without fail.

"Hihihihihing!"

Thud—

A terrible pressure fell upon Velma as she took a step back with a loud thud. When she tried to take another step back, her entire body flinched and she was forced to stop in her tracks.

"Hihihihihihihihing!" Velma's loud cries clearly represented the struggle she was feeling.

The Hell Horse remembered the look on her master's eyes before. He had this dark, dull and gloomy look on his face. Even his eyes seemed to be empty as he lost interest in everything. But then, one day, her owner asked her to go with him to earth. Her master disguised her as a young and tiny foal.

That was when they met Hella. The God of Death worked on the field with Hella. It was quite interesting. The God that was in charge of death suddenly engaged in activity which gave rise to new life.

—Ah, for real? Louis. Why can't you do anything in the field?! Is there anything that you're good at?!

—...I'm good at turning the living into the dead.

—Is this the time for that...?!

—Sorry...

—Hihihihihing.

Velma could clearly remember how Hella nagged the God of Death. However, even when Hella nagged at him, she could see the small smile that curled at the corner of her master's lips. Both Velma and the God of Death caused problems back then. However, they were both very happy.

Hella smiled as she stroked Velma's face.

Crack, crack, crack—

Thud, thud, thud—!

As the guardian god tasked to protect the balance of Hell, Velma was bound to receive punishment if she chose to defy and not fulfill her tasks. Intense numbing pain ripped through Velma's body as the sounds of bones cracking rang loudly in everyone's ears.

[Velma is the god tasked to maintain the balance of Hell.]

Velma took another step forward as the sound rang.

Thud—!

And another...

Thud—!

However, that was her limit. She could no longer move from the pain. Velma felt like her body was being stabbed by dozens of swords as her bones broke.

"Hihihihihing!" Velma screamed as she fell on the floor twitching.

"...Velma." Hella looked at the Hell horse sadly.

'This is terrible.' Minhyuk felt sorry for both Hella and Velma. Especially for Velma, who was suddenly given the task to kill one of the beings that were most precious to her. In fact, it could be seen how resistant Velma was with how she would not attack Hella, even when her entire body was in pain.

Then, Minhyuk mumbled, "Perhaps this is because Velma is owned by the God of Death?"

"What...?" Hella looked at Minhyuk in confusion.

But just to be sure, Minhyuk voiced out his thought, "By any chance, is the God of Death the one that imposed such a restriction on Velma?"

"Probably? Although the God of Death cares deeply and cherishes Velma, this is something that he has to do."

Minhyuk nodded as he turned to look at Velma, who was screaming while her head was being pressed down on the ground. Then, he said, "What would happen if I took over Velma's ownership?"

"...What?" Hella's eyes grew wide.

What would happen if Velma's master became Minhyuk? If this was possible, then they might be able to do something about their overall situation.

Minhyuk opened his skill window.

(Allurer's Cooking Skill)

Active Skill

Level: 2

Penalty for Use: -2 in all of your stats.

Effects: You will be able to tame the opponent by creating the recipe that they want and feeding it to them. The probability of successfully taming the opponent will increase or decrease depending on various factors and conditions.

Number of Available Uses: 2/3

The Allurer's Cooking Skill was one of the class-specific skills that the Food God had. Minhyuk had used this very skill to bring the Baphomet named Rune under him. If Minhyuk succeeded in taming Velma using the Allurer's Cooking Skill, there was a chance that the coercive pressure that was making her suffer would disappear.

"Create a Recipe."

[Creating a recipe that the other party desires.]

[You can now check the recipe for Yukhoe Bibimbap.]

[The amount of buff that can be used has been decreased due to creating a recipe.]

(Yukhoe Bibimbap Recipe for Velma)

Required Ingredients: Benya's Eye of the Round Steak, Dew-covered Lettuce, Sun's Gochujang, Foltoni's Pears, etc...

Expected Dish Grade: Unique~Legendary

Expected Effects:

- Velma's Blazing Dash will dramatically increase.
- Velma's Flame Related Skills will dramatically increase.

This was quite unexpected for Minhyuk.

'She wants a Yukhoe Bibimbap?'

Then, he caught sight of Velma's teeth, and instantly understood why.

'It looks sharper and tougher than a lion's teeth.'

Velma was most probably an omnivore.

"She wants yukhoe bibimbap."

"It's because I used to give her yukhoe bibimbap before."

Minhyuk nodded when he heard Hella's words. It was likely that Velma could not forget the taste of the bibimbap that she ate back then. Fortunately, yukhoe bibimbap was very quick and easy to cook.

Minhyuk quickly began to cook for the distressed Velma. He swiftly chopped and sliced the vegetables, before moving to take out the eye of the round steak that he always carried in his inventory and sliced it thinly.

After that, he scooped rice on a huge bibimbap bowl and began to add the bean sprouts, lettuce, carrots, pears, and the yukhoe. Then, he placed some gochujang on top of the yukhoe and drizzled some sesame oil, before placing an egg yolk in the middle as a decoration.

Minyuk placed the yukhoe bibimbap in front of Velma the moment he completed it. It was quite a sight to put food in front of the struggling Hell Horse. Even so, it still allowed Velma to take in the scent of the food.

The scent wafting from the bowl was very nostalgic. It was a scent that she had smelled a long time ago. It was obvious that Velma had not forgotten the yukhoe bibimbap that Hella had given her before. After all, it was a delicacy that she could never eat in Hell, a place where nothing grew or thrived.

‘The most important part to take into consideration here is that the chances of the Allurer’s Cooking Skill becoming successful depend on various factors.’

At this moment, Velma did not want to hurt Hella. This could be a reason for a higher probability of the Allurer’s Cooking Skill becoming successful.

Hella approached Velma and swept her hair. “Do you remember this dish?”

“Hihihihing!” Velma cried.

Hella smiled as she mixed the bibimbap for the Hell horse. The moment she placed the bowl down again, Velma immediately ate the dish.

Munch, munch, munch—

Minhyuk, who went back to swinging his hoe, watched Velma chew the bibimbap like crazy. Watching her eat like that made Minhyuk remember the taste of yukhoe bibimbap that he ate before. He remembered popping the egg yolk placed in the center.

Fwoosh—

The yolk had dripped down the rice and the vegetables as he mixed everything with the red gochujang. At the same time, the appetizing and savory scent of the sesame oil had wafted and further stimulated his salivary glands.

Mix, mix—

Once everything was mixed and had turned red, he then scooped a huge bite and put it in his mouth.

Munch, munch, munch—

The spicy flavor of the gochujang and the savory sesame oil had then spread in his mouth the moment he chewed the mouthful of bibimbap. But that was not all. The assorted ingredients like pears, bean sprouts, carrots, lettuce, and many other vegetables also added splashes of flavors that created a pleasant mixture in his mouth.

Gulp—

Minhyuk gulped at the memory.

At the same time, Velma finished all of the yukhoe bibimbap. Seeing this, Minhyuk felt very nervous.

[Mother of Hell Horses Velma has eaten the Allurer's Dish: Yukhoe Bibimbap.]

[The Allurer's Cooking Skill is attempting to tame Velma.]

[The taming process is very difficult!]

Velma felt something strange. She felt a force appear in her body that tried to separate her from the God of Death. She immediately pressed down on that foreign force.

'I have to protect the God of Death.'

[Velma is refusing the Allurer's Cooking Skill!]

Minhyuk's face crumpled. However, Velma caught sight of Hella's face.

'I also don't want to hurt her.'

[Velma is conflicted!]

[Velma's great love for Hella has greatly increased the probability of the success of Allurer's Cooking Skill.]

[Velma is refusing the Allurer's Cooking Skill.]

[Velma is conflicted!]

[Velma's great love for Hella...]

The notifications rang constantly. Minhyuk, who saw the very conflicted Velma, shouted loudly, "Velma, I promise you..."

"Hihihihing..." Velma cried softly. She could see the sincerity in Minhyuk's eyes.

"I will send you back to your master's arms."

He was speaking the truth. Velma was a ferocious Hell horse. Even if he could tame her and make her into his subordinate, there was no guarantee that Minhyuk would be able to control her. He was also aware that the God of Death would not leave him alone if he took Velma with him. Basically, Velma would become Minhyuk's temporarily.

[The Allurer's Cooking Skill has succeeded.]

[Velma's taming has succeeded.]

[However, Velma is the wild and uncontrollable Guardian God of Hell.]

[You have tamed the Hell God. You have made a surprising achievement by doing something that even the God of Summoning has never done!]

[You have obtained the Title: What the Hell? Is There Nothing That You Can't Seduce?]

In the end, Minhyuk successfully took over the ownership of Velma. Once Velma's master changed, the pain that wracked her entire body slowly disappeared.

Crackleeeee...

At the same time, the blazing flames started to die down and disappear. Hella embraced Velma, who was finally free from the pain.

While Hella and Velma were busy catching up with each other, Minhyuk continued with his job and stepped up the pace. As he swung his hoe, he saw the figure of a man standing not too far away from them.

The man was wearing a ragged black robe and a bare face that could be considered to be very handsome. His eyes looked completely empty, but there was the unmistakable charisma that an absolute being would have emanating from his body.

‘That guy is... the God of Death...’

Now that the flames had gone down, it was not that difficult to harvest the Sin’s Cabbage anymore.

Thuuuuuud—

With one last swing of his hoe, the notifications rang one after the other.

[You have successfully harvested the Sin’s Cabbage!]

[You have harvested all of the Sin’s Ingredients. You have made an amazing achievement!]

[All of your stats have increased by 1%!]

[You have gained 500 REP.]

[You have gained 200 CHA.]

Despite the notifications that rang constantly in his ears, Minhyuk stood still and watched the small light that slowly appeared from the places where the Sin’s Ingredients were once buried. Just like electric currents flowing through wires, the light began to wriggle and spread and lit up Hell.

Amidst the beautiful scene of Hell turning bright, the God of Death stood still and looked at Hella with a sad smile on his face.

[You have completed the Sudden Quest: Harvesting Ingredients Before Hella’s Soul Perish.]

The Sword of Aeon flew out of Minhyuk’s inventory on his own and floated in front of him. It then rose and flew with the wind as the God of Death stretched out his hand.

“Louis...?”

The God of Death did not say anything to Hella. He just showed a small smile toward Hella, who had not yet disappeared. After a few moments of silence, he, who blamed himself for her death and ran away in cowardice, finally gathered the courage to say the words that he could not bring himself to say for thousands of years before the woman he loved disappeared.

“I love you, Hella.”

Crackleeeee—

Black flames shot out of his fingertips and filled the Sword of Aeon. The flames spread quickly across Hell, like the aftermath of a nuclear bomb’s explosion. Then, the aftermath suddenly stopped before getting sucked back inside the Sword of Aeon.

Rumbleeeeeeeee—

Then, powerful winds and tremors shook Hell.

[The Sword of Aeon's Second Seal has been lifted!]

[The skies, the seas, the land.]

[The greatest and strongest sword that can split the world has appeared.]

The same notifications that rang when the first seal was lifted rang once again. It was followed by another set of notifications, which rang for all of Athenae to hear.

[This Sword...]

[...has cut even the Eight Pillars.]